1974

Training Needs of Professional Louisiana Extension Field Personnel in Group Dynamics.

Reginald William Seiders II
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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TRAINING NEEDS OF PROFESSIONAL LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL IN GROUP DYNAMICS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in

The Department of Extension and International Education

by

Reginald William Seiders, II B.S., University of Maryland, 1967 M.S., University of Tennessee, 1972 December, 1974
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Training needs in group dynamics of professional Louisiana
Extension field personnel were identified by using the Tyler
Curriculum Development Model. Three sources of information were used
to determine training needs: 1) Extension agents, 2) their group
related job characteristics, and 3) the subject matter area of group
dynamics.

The population of the study included all professional Louisiana
Extension field personnel with at least one year of experience as of
May 1, 1974. The study sample comprised 184 individuals who returned
the questionnaire. Three principal methods were used to collect the
information: 1) library research, 2) mail questionnaire, and 3) computer retrieval.

The major focus of analysis in the study was perceived helpfulness
of group dynamics concepts by Extension agents. This was assumed to
reflect training needs. Relationships between perceived helpfulness
and agent characteristics and job characteristics were studied.

The application of screening processes based on Extension
philosophy and job-related and learning psychology resulted in a set
of 35 group dynamics concepts selected from the literature having
important implications for Extension group work. Based on agent
ratings of perceived helpfulness of concepts in the study, the concepts were placed in two categories of lower and higher training priority as follows:

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In-service training programs were recommended to emphasize major training priority concepts. It was also recommended that training for Extension agents working in the four major program areas be adjusted to meet their specific needs as shown in the study.

For agricultural agents, it was observed that they rated seven concepts lower than all other agents. Five were considered higher training priority concepts. They also indicated that maintaining member participation, forming new groups, and increasing group productivity were special problems to them in their group work.
Home economics agents perceived new group formation to be a greater problem than any other agents.

Among 4-H agents, it was observed that group productivity, leadership development, and quarreling among members were problems to them.

Community resource development agents rated nine of the group dynamics concepts lower than other agents. Five were considered higher training priority concepts. They felt that maintaining member participation and new group formation were special problems to them in their group work.
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

Extension type programs have historically worked with groups of people, even before the Cooperative Extension Service officially came into existence with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 (81). Initially, groups were formed to teach, do demonstrations and learn from one another. In these early groups, Extension agents played the primary role of teacher and demonstrator. This type of group activity is still carried on today.

Early with youth work in Extension, there arose a real concern for the development of good citizenship practices. Group work in 4-H not only emphasized learning new agricultural and home economics skills, but stressed leadership development and the group process as a democratic activity.

In adult work, group activity became more important with the use of advisory groups in the program development process. Advisory groups are formed to make recommendations to local level Extension staff to assist in program planning.

Today with the increase in the number of groups formed for community resource development purposes, groups are playing even more important roles. Many groups are asked to make decisions that will ultimately change the lives of all members in a community.
Statement of the Problem

After many years of experience, most Extension agents learn to work effectively with groups in their communities. After being in a parish (county) for many years, an agent acquires an almost intimate knowledge of the people. He knows how each person will respond to different situations. In well-established groups, members learn how others will react and which techniques work best with their groups (9).

There are often problems with newly organized groups, especially when members are not well acquainted. A new agent is often at a disadvantage in working with groups, because he does not know the people well. The chances for success in these newer situations are often much less than in well-established groups.

In some cases, agents do not know how to approach different groups. Many groups are left to function on their own; some with success, some with failure. "Men who build groups must know something about how they work; they cannot depend on tradition (11:301)."

It appears that many Extension agents feel somewhat inadequate when working with groups. In a study of community development concepts in Tennessee, it was found that Extension workers often expressed the need to learn how to organize and work with groups. The study "... further substantiates findings of previous studies indicating that social science areas such as group dynamics, program planning and the diffusion process are areas in which agents lack confidence and/or training (146:20)."
Virginia Lee Wang (103) stated, in a presentation during a training program for Maryland Extension Agents, that the program was based on requests from the county agents themselves. Extension agents were concerned with "... human behavior, the value system, group process, interpersonal relations and communication. ... They seemed to ask the same questions: Why do people behave the way they do? How do I communicate with people who won't listen, and what makes a group tick? (103:3)."

In Louisiana, Community Resource Development Specialists of the Cooperative Extension Service have stated as one of their educational objectives: "A clearer understanding on the part of Extension personnel of the role, content, and methods of sociology to achieve greater group participation, both in planning and execution stages of programs (144:102)."

Santopolo points out the need that "sociological insights are valuable to anyone concerned with action in society ... extension workers, who consider themselves action-oriented, ought to master some assortment of sociological knowledge beyond that which they acquire in their general education (97:185)."

Need for the Study

With the increase in the emphasis on community development and the need to reach more people, group action is becoming more and more important. Agents should have an understanding of and use relevant concepts of group dynamics to help ensure maximum group efficiency and productivity. Cartwright and Lippitt have expressed well the
importance of groups and a knowledge of group dynamics (18:267):

... groups exist, they are inevitable and ubiquitous, they mobilize powerful forces having profound effects upon individuals; these effects may be good or bad; and through a knowledge of group dynamics there lies the possibility of maximizing their good value ....

A correct understanding of group dynamics permits the possibility that desirable consequences from groups can be deliberately enhanced. Through a knowledge of group dynamics, groups can be made to serve better ends, for knowledge gives power to modify human beings and human behavior.

A wealth of knowledge has come of research in group dynamics from the disciplines of sociology, psychology, social psychology and other areas. According to Olmsted, the study of group dynamics has both practical and theoretical aspects; "it is useful for finding out how to improve meetings and conferences; and it aids in our understanding of how people interrelate with one another (67:143)."

The major goal of research in the area of group dynamics has been to enable a person "... to be able ... to read the signs that appear in the behavior (his own as well as others) - to diagnose accurately what is going on, predict where it is going, and how it will change if he takes a given action - all of this soon enough for him to intervene and try to change the course of events if he deems it desirable (5:296)."

Prior to this study, no formal attempt has been made to determine training needs of Louisiana Extension field personnel specifically in the area of group dynamics. In order to plan academic course work, workshops, and other in-service type training programs, these needs of Extension personnel must be identified.
Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to determine training needs of professional Louisiana Extension field personnel in the area of group dynamics.

Specific objectives were to:

1. Identify key group dynamics concepts that agents should apply to their group work to increase efficiency and productivity.
2. Determine the relationship between perceived helpfulness of key group dynamics concepts, and selected agent characteristics.
3. Determine the relationship between perceived helpfulness of key group dynamics concepts and selected job characteristics of agent group work.
4. Determine the relationship between selected agent characteristics and job characteristics.

Limitations of the Study

Figure 1 is a diagram of a conceptual framework of the field of group dynamics; the outline of which was suggested by Horwitz (45) and Indik (47). The major elements are: 1) the individual members who make up the group, 2) the group itself with the on-going interactions among its members, and 3) the influences from outside the group (environment), which could include other groups or a larger organization. This study will concentrate only on the structural, process and property concepts of the group. It should be kept in mind that consideration of
Figure 1. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE FIELD OF GROUP DYNAMICS
the individual and the environment are equally important to an 
understanding of how groups function.

Definitions of Terms

The following are definitions of selected terms used in this 
study:

Extension group. A group is usually defined as two or more people 
interacting over time on a face-to-face basis sharing common goals. 
For the purpose of this study, the Extension group is defined as any 
client group the professional agent works with in his capacity as an 
Extension employee.

Group dynamics. An applied and theoretical field of social 
science that has as its major aim a better understanding of how people 
interact in face-to-face situations in a group setting. It has as a 
practical goal the use of theories to help groups function more 
efficiently and productively.

LEMIS. The Louisiana Extension Management Information System 
(LEMIS) is part of the national Extension Management Information 
System (EMIS). All Extension personnel use this system to report how 
they spend their time and the audience contacts made.
CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The determination of training needs in this study was based on Ralph W. Tyler's theory of curriculum development (84). This model has been used to develop single discipline areas as well as entire educational curriculums. In this study it was used, with modifications, to determine educational needs in the cross-discipline field of group dynamics.

The usual procedure is to use the model to first establish general educational objectives; then, based on these, select specific objectives. This study began with an implied general objective and the model was used to suggest specific educational objectives. The implied general educational objective in this study was: Professional Louisiana Extension field personnel to apply appropriate group dynamics concepts to their group work.

Determination of Needs

The Tyler rationale is based on a search for appropriate educational objectives based on the learner's needs. According to Tyler (84), learners' needs are found by comparing desirable standards of behavior or acceptable norms to the present condition of the learner. Leagans also describes needs in terms of a gap. "Needs
represent an imbalance, lack of adjustment, or gap between the present situation or status quo and a new or changed set of conditions assumed to be more desirable (122:92)."

The "gap theory" applied to this study represents the difference between the Extension agents' present level of cognitive ability in relation to selected group dynamics concepts and a desired level of cognitive ability of these concepts (see Figure 2).

![Diagram]

**Figure 2.** NEED IN TERMS OF COGNITIVE ABILITY OF SELECTED GROUP DYNAMICS CONCEPTS

A major assumption in this study was that perceived helpfulness of concepts was an indication not only of how relevant the concept actually was to an Extension agent's group work, but also an indication of how well agents understand the concept and could readily see implications for their group work. The implications of this assumption are that agents' responses to helpfulness of a concept are
based on: 1) the level of understanding of the concept and its implications for group work, and 2) the degree to which the concept is actually relevant to their group work. Conclusions must be made very carefully, since it is impossible to separate these two factors from the data.

The design of this study did not permit an accurate estimate of the present level of cognitive ability of Louisiana Extension field personnel with regards to group dynamics concepts. Nevertheless, since all the concepts selected were regarded as important and operative in most Extension group situations, ratings of perceived helpfulness of these concepts indicated by Extension agents were generally considered to be the same as ratings of their cognitive ability.

Sources of Objectives

The Tyler Model includes three major sources of educational objectives: 1) the learners themselves, 2) the contemporary life, and 3) the subject specialists. In this study, the learners are the professional Louisiana Extension field personnel. Their job role in relation to their group work is considered the appropriate focus of contemporary life. The subject specialists' source is the cross-discipline literature in the field of group dynamics.

To gather information about the learners a mail questionnaire was sent to all professional Louisiana Extension field personnel who had been employed for at least one year. Information about learners included personal characteristics, educational background and attitudes toward group work.
The second component of the study was to look at the job roles of the agents in terms of their Extension group work. This approach is described by Tyler as job analysis; "... a method of analyzing the activities carried on by the worker in a particular field in order that a training program can be focused upon these critical activities performed by the worker (84:17)."

The questionnaire also provided information about the job role in terms of major work areas and problems associated with Extension work. Another major source of information about job role came from data retrieved from the computerized Louisiana Extension Management Information System (LEMIS). The data collected for each agent included: 1) percent of total teaching time devoted to group work and 2) total number of teaching mandays devoted to group work.

The third major source of information came from the subject matter specialists. For this study, the subject specialists' source was the voluminous, multi-disciplinary literature in the field of group dynamics. An intensive review of the literature was made and a conceptual framework was developed to organize prominent ideas from the vast amount of material (see Figure 1, p. 6). Several sequences of selections were made to choose only the concepts which could have important implications for Extension field personnel.

**Philosophical and Psychological Screens**

Tyler (84) points out that the number of objectives that appear when one considers the three sources are many more than should be attempted in an educational program. He suggests that the objectives
be passed through philosophical and psychological screens to eliminate unimportant and contradictory ones. Only a small number of highly consistent objectives should be considered. He states that "... an educational program is not effective if so much is attempted that little is accomplished (84:33)."

Several factors made it difficult to limit and organize the concepts in the area of group dynamics. The area of study is multidisciplinary with each discipline having a different research perspective. "Each of such disciplines as sociology, psychology, religion, philosophy, and anthropology has its own concepts, and each concept is slightly different since it is colored by its particular orientation (50:19)."

The sheer volume of literature poses some problems. Although still a relatively young area of study, the amount of research literature has grown rapidly in the past few years. For example, McGrath and Altman (64) have listed 2,699 articles related to small group research in their bibliography.

Another factor is that as yet, there is no real theoretical integration of the information available to tie the data together. Shaw (78) points out that much progress has been made in the analysis of group interaction and functioning, but there is still a lot to be done before the group process can be completely understood. "The greatest need today is an adequate theory for the organization of data, so that implications of the data at hand can be spelled out more definitively and deficiencies revealed more clearly (78:362)."
Philosophical and psychological screens, major elements in the Tyler Model, were used to select important group dynamic concepts. The philosophical criteria by which the concepts were examined were general in nature. They included the following, which would be consistent with the philosophies of Louisiana State University and the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service:

1. The concept should emphasize democratic rather than autocratic group processes.
2. The aim of the concept should be to enable all group members to grow personally.
3. The concept should encourage full participation regardless of race, sex, or religious criteria.
4. The concept should increase basic human understandings.

The criteria used in the psychological screen for selecting important group dynamics concepts were more specific. Psychological criteria take into account the educational feasibility of the objective.

An important consideration must be the number of concepts to be included in an educational program. Gagne (28) emphasized that learning concepts takes time, because the learners must be exposed to the use of the concept in different situations. In a paper given at the Extension Curriculum Development Conference in 1963, Tyler stated that "... it takes time to learn to understand and use a concept effectively... The extension worker needs concepts to guide him and if he really learns to use them effectively he will have to practice them in many different situations (147:5)."
Tyler suggests that, depending on the circumstances, a number between ten and thirty is more likely to be usable than a smaller or larger number. Thirty-five concepts have been selected in this study. A graduate course in group dynamics might include thirty or more concepts, while a workshop or other type of inservice training program might include only a few.

Another important criterion for concept selection was how relevant it is to the work of Extension personnel in the field. Will they be able to use the knowledge of the concept to gain a better understanding of their group work and to help them become more efficient and productive?

Related to the above is whether or not the concept is an important building block of major principles and generalizations useful in Extension group work.

The National Task Force on Cooperative Extension Inservice Training recommended that a concept for Extension Agents should be (100:7):

1. Important, central, key
2. Transmittable through planned educational experience
3. Based on or related to research
4. Useful in stimulating search for meaning and in encouraging further investigation.
5. Useful in interrelating facts and lower level concepts
6. Useful in decision making
Classification of Objectives

Bloom (14), Krathwohl (53), and others have developed a classification system for educational objectives. The system is divided into three major areas: 1) the cognitive domain, 2) the affective domain, and 3) the psychomotor domain.

The cognitive domain is concerned with intellectual abilities of the learner. "Cognitive objectives vary from simple recall of material learned to highly original and creative ways of combining and synthesizing new ideas and materials (53:6)." The affective domain deals with the learners' feelings and emotions. Such objectives express "... interests, attitude, appreciations, values, and emotional sets or biases (53:7)." Psychomotor objectives are concerned with the development of motor skills; "objectives which emphasize some muscular or motor skill, some manipulation of materials and objects, or some act which requires a neuromuscular co-ordination ... (53:7)."

Specific levels of objectives have been identified for the cognitive and affective domains. As yet, levels have not been determined for the psychomotor domain.

There are six levels in the cognitive domain, arranged in a hierarchical order; each successive level representing more complex types of learning. Each level is assumed to include the behavior at the lower levels. The six levels are: 1) knowledge, simple awareness and recall of information; 2) comprehension, a grasp of the meaning of the material; 3) application, ability to use material; 4) analysis,
ability to break material down in order to understand component parts;  
5) synthesis, ability to put components into a new whole; and  
6) evaluation, ability to judge value of new material (33).

There are five levels in the affective domain: 1) receiving, a  
learner's willingness to pay attention to a particular phenomena or  
stimuli; 2) responding, active participation of the learner; 3) valuing,  
the learner attaches worth or value to the particular phenomenon;  
4) organization, the learner builds an internally consistent value  
system; and 5) characterized by a value complex, the value system  
controls the behavior of the learner (33). The basic process when a  
learner moves through the affective domain is referred to as internal-
ization.

Attention given to the affective domain in this study is in terms  
of the favorableness of attitudes toward group work among Louisiana  
Extension Agents. Attitudes are a very important area. Sanders  
points out that in group work "the Extension worker is the most  
important factor in determining success or failure of involving  
clientele . . . . His enthusiasm for or reluctance to engage in this  
activity will be transmitted to the clientele who are participating  
(96:35)."

The primary emphasis of this study was concerned with the  
cognitive domain. The first part of the analysis of data deals with  
how many agents are at least at the lowest level of the cognitive  
domain in terms of simple awareness of a concept.
Another step was to try to determine how many agents actually used the concept in their group work. The responses to the questionnaire were based on very simplistic definitions of a concept. As Steele points out "a concept is much more than a definition. However, definitions are handy starting places for analyzing the state of understanding of a concept (132:6)." It is assumed that an affirmative response to awareness and use should be interpreted as only minimal awareness and use.

The major variable used in the analysis in the study was perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concept. Perceived helpfulness was considered to be some indicator of whether or not a concept was being used in group work. It was also assumed to be an indication of understanding of a concept and the ability to see implication for its use.

In terms of an educational program in the area of group dynamics for professional Extension field personnel, objectives should be selected from both the cognitive and affective domains of the taxonomy. For practical purposes, educational objectives should be written with the third level of the cognitive domain in mind—application. "Application refers to the ability to use learned materials in new and concrete situations. This may include the application of such things as rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories (33:20)."
Concepts

Concepts are ideas and mental abstractions which help us think about reality. They are vehicles of thought (40). "When through experience we get a mental picture in our minds of one of the objects or forces which make up our world we have a concept, which immediately becomes our 'set' for any further perception of that same thing (85:64)." Other definitions of concepts include: "... the label of a set of things that have something in common (1:37)"; "... tools for thinking about and dealing with the real world (116:132)"; and "... a bounded region in the cognitive space which is reacted to as an entity (75:34)."

An important characteristic of concepts are that they can be changed and added on to (147). Woodruff (85) points out that often the first impressions of a concept are not accurate or complete. They are usually changed and added on to with new experiences. Carter also states that concepts are tools and we can add "... on the details that have accumulated because, if a concept is useful, it is open-ended -- we continue to refine, to develop, to expand the idea so it becomes an increasingly useful and refined tool for us (139:10)."

Concept Learning

With the astronomical increase in knowledge over the past decades, it is becoming increasingly difficult to learn a great deal about a field of knowledge. Twenty or thirty years ago, it was not unthinkable for a university educated individual to know something of major ideas in many fields. Today this is very difficult.
Concept learning has developed as an attempt to meet this concern. Dressel (142) points out that for knowledge to be appreciated and used it must be organized in a meaningful manner. It is no longer possible in education to have learners go about memorizing isolated facts in a field of study.

Concept learning involves the organization and subsequent learning of key ideas in a field of study. Tyler states that concept learning in terms of training Extension agents should be "... a conscious effort to help the professional person build concepts and understand concepts that are useful in guiding his own thinking about the process (147:3)."

The actual process of concept learning has been explained by Woodruff (85). The basic units of concept learning are individual perceptual experiences. Each individual develops his own concepts through his unique perceptual experiences. Various perceptual experiences are brought together to form simple concepts. These simple concepts can then be combined in appropriate ways to form major concepts. In terms of a discipline area, this process has been called forming a "cognitive map" of the discipline. Concepts can be used to make generalizations to new situations or combined with other concepts to form principles (116).

Gagne (28) points out that it is important when designing educational experiences to distinguish between concepts and principles. The two concerns involved are that: 1) concepts are simpler; they make up the principles, and therefore to learn a principle, the concepts
must be learned previously, and 2) inductive learning experiences are not suited to concept learning. Inductive learning is excellent for the learning of principles, but very inefficient for concept learning.

Many authors have pointed out the advantages of concept learning. Carlson states that "... learning by concepts enables the adult education participant to find meaningful relationships among ideas. It avoids wasting time learning masses of isolated facts about a subject (90:1)." Dressell points out that "concepts improve learning because they permit the individual to organize the learning in which he engages, and they permit him to deal more intelligently with new situations (143:4)." Saltz (75) indicates that concept formation and utilization are among the most important aspects of higher mental processes. Concept learning provides the learner with a powerful tool that facilitates learning.

In emphasizing the importance of concept learning for Extension agents, The National Task Force On Cooperative Extension Inservice Training has listed the following as activities that concepts permit or encourage (99:29):

1) appreciation, 2) direction, 3) economy in and facilitation of communications, 4) mediation, 5) imagination, 6) identification, 7) prediction, 8) differentiation, and 9) integration.
Summary

The theoretical considerations used in this study were discussed in this chapter. Certain training needs in this study were determined by comparing the present level of cognitive ability with the desired level of cognitive ability of selected group dynamics concepts.

Based on the Tyler Model, a combination of three sources of information were used to determine training needs in this study: 1) the learners themselves (agent characteristics), 2) the contemporary life (job characteristics), and 3) the subject specialists (selected concepts).

After an intensive review of literature, philosophical and psychological screens were used to select group dynamics concepts that have important implications for Extension group work.

Based on the classification of objectives of Bloom, Krathwohl, and others, it was decided that educational objectives should be written in terms of the application level. Extension agents should have a high enough cognitive ability to apply the concepts to their group work.

The discussion of concepts and concept learning emphasized the importance of concepts and showed how they can be applied to an educational program.

The next chapter will deal with the actual research procedures used in this study based on the theoretical framework set forth in this chapter.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Concept Selection

The first step in the selection process was to make an intensive review of literature in the field of group dynamics. A list was made of all major concepts that continually reappeared and seemed to have implications for Extension workers. The initial list of 94 concepts is found in Appendix 1.

The next step was to construct a conceptual framework to organize the concepts in a meaningful integrative structure (see Figure 1, p. 6). Unimportant and redundant concepts were eliminated. Major concepts were identified and where necessary, sub-concepts were subordinated under major integrative concepts.

The conceptual framework was divided into three major parts: 1) the individuals that make up the group, 2) the group itself with the dynamic interactions of its members, and 3) influences from the outside environment. For the purpose of this study, only the group was considered. Concepts under the group were divided into three areas: 1) structural concepts, 2) process concepts, and 3) property concepts.

Fifty concepts were used in the questionnaire (see Appendix 2). Using the philosophical and psychological screening process mentioned in the previous chapter, 35 concepts were selected for analysis.
The Population

The population for this study included all professional Louisiana Extension field personnel with at least one year of work experience as of May 1, 1974. A list was made by comparing the personnel lists of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service of May 1, 1973 and May 1, 1974. Those professional field workers who appeared on both lists were selected. Personnel notices were also checked for that time period to determine transfers and changes in marital status.

The Sample

Mail questionnaires (see Appendix 2) were sent to 290 professional Louisiana Extension field personnel. The sample for this study comprised 184 individuals who returned the questionnaires. This represented 63.4 percent of the population. Table 1 gives a comparison of sample and population characteristics by sex and position title. Fairly close approximation was obtained between the sample and the population in the criteria indicated. Consequently, the sample could be considered representative of the population.

Collection of Data

Three principal methods were used to collect the information for this study: 1) library research, 2) mail questionnaire and 3) computer retrieval. An intensive review of literature was made in the field of group dynamics to select key concepts. Based on this review of literature, a discussion of the selected concepts follows in the next chapter.
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<th>Sample (N=184)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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A mail questionnaire was sent to all professional Louisiana Extension field workers who had been employed for at least a year. Information from the questionnaire included Extension agent personal characteristics, their educational background, major work areas and attitudes toward group work. The questionnaire also solicited data about agents' awareness, use, and perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts as well as problems encountered in group work.

Information regarding percent of teaching time devoted to group work, and total number of mandays devoted to group work were gathered for each agent by computer retrieval from the Louisiana Extension Management Information System (LEMIS).

Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaire and the LEMIS computer printout were coded, recorded, and punched on data cards. Tabulations and statistical computations were made at the Louisiana State University Computer Center.

The analysis was based on the Tyler Model of three major sources of educational objectives: 1) the learners (agent characteristics), 2) the contemporary life (job characteristics), and 3) the subject specialists (selected concepts).

The primary focus of this study was on the perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts as they relate to agent and job characteristics (see Figure 2). The major variables under agent characteristics were age, Extension tenure, educational background, and attitudes toward group work. Relationships were sought between
Perceived Helpfulness

SELECTED CONCEPTS

AGENT CHARACTERISTICS
- Age
- Tenure
- Education
- Attitudes

JOB CHARACTERISTICS
- Major Work Area
- Problems in Group Work
- Group Teaching in Group Work
- Time

Figure 3. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY
age, Extension tenure, and perceived helpfulness of selected group
dynamics concepts.

The major variables under job characteristics included major
work area, teaching time devoted to group work, and problems associated
with group work. Relationships were sought between percent teaching
time devoted to group work and perceived helpfulness of selected group
dynamics concepts. A test was also made to determine if there were
significant differences between major work area and adjusted means of
perceived helpfulness of selected concepts.

Certain agent and job characteristics were compared. Age,
Extension tenure, and educational background were compared with major
work area. Relationships were also sought between age, Extension
tenure, and problems in group work.

Within the job characteristics, comparisons were made between
teaching time devoted to group work by major work area and problems
encountered in group work.

The three statistical tests used in this study were simple
correlation, regression, and chi-square analysis.

Correlations were run to measure the relationships between the
variables agent age, tenure, and percent teaching time devoted to
group work, and the level of perceived helpfulness of selected group
dynamics concepts.

Regression analysis was used to determine differences between
adjusted mean perceived helpfulness of each concept and Extension
agents' major work area. The same type of analysis was used to
determine if differences existed between the adjusted means of agent age, tenure, and percent teaching time devoted to group work and the degree to which certain problems existed in group work.

Chi-square procedures were used to determine if differences existed between agent major work area, and age, tenure, educational background, and problems encountered in group work.

The minimum level of statistical significance used in this study was .25. Statistical significance below that level was indicated at the level found.
CHAPTER IV

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature will be discussed under three headings: 1) importance of the field of group dynamics, 2) training needs of Extension Agents related to group dynamics, and 3) review of selected group dynamics concepts. The major emphasis of this chapter was on the review of group dynamics concepts, because it represents one of the three major sources of educational objectives in the Tyler Model.

Importance of Group Dynamics

According to data from the Louisiana Extension Management Information System (LEMIS), Louisiana Extension field personnel spend about 45 percent of their time working with groups. Group work will probably increase in importance as community resource development programs expand and also as all agents attempt to reach more people. There is much that an agent can learn about groups that would enable him to help his groups and leaders become more effective.

Beal and Blount (8) state that it is especially important for change agents to have an understanding of group processes. They are often trying to help individuals form themselves into productive groups and maintain productivity until the tasks are complete.

In a conference for Maryland Extension Agents, Waetjen (102) pointed out that one of the most serious mistakes that can be made
by those who work with groups is to over-simplify the way groups function and what they do for individuals. Even a small group is a complex social phenomenon.

Lippitt and Seashore (93) suggest that by using appropriate procedures, much can be done to help a group mature. Groups can become more productive and replace or eliminate internal conflicts.

Santopolo stresses the importance of a knowledge of group dynamics for the Extension youth worker (97:192-193):

In order to perform as a youth worker, the extension worker must know the manner in which small groups came into being. Once the groups form, he must know how they influence the development of the individual members, and how these groups operate within themselves.

Patton and Giffin (69) and Huse (46) point out that once an individual acquires an understanding of the nature of groups and their functioning, he then has the capacity to improve the consequences of group action and predict and control certain activities.

**Training Needs of Extension Agents Related to Group Dynamics**

Sanders has listed areas of knowledge and skill needed by Extension workers. Those that relate to group dynamics are (96:139):

1. The power structure, cliques, control groups, clubs, and other voluntary organizations.

2. How to identify, develop and use leaders; the types of leaders which are useful to different kinds of groups, both formal and informal.

3. How to involve people in determining their common needs and interests.

5. How to motivate people.
6. The decision-making process.

In a study to determine training needs among Wisconsin County Agents, Clark (140) found that 75 percent of the agents felt that a knowledge of the methods and techniques of working with groups was of much importance to their work. This item ranked third in importance out of 55 items in the study. The first two items were group dynamics related areas. Eighty-four percent of the respondents felt that techniques of developing one's own leadership abilities were of much importance, while 76 percent felt that a knowledge of the methods and techniques of selecting and training leaders was equally important.

At the national level, the National Task Force On Cooperative Extension Inservice Training, recommended the following group dynamics related areas for inservice training of Extension Agents (99:13-14):

1. Group dynamics, group interaction
2. Understandings and skills needed in human relations
3. How to motivate people
4. Decision making
5. Power structure, clique groups
6. How to identify and develop leaders

This same committee recommended inclusion of leadership development, group discussion techniques and communication in an inductive training program (100:9).
In a study of training needs of Louisiana Extension workers, Flint found that (143:75):

1. Sixty percent felt they needed much or very much training in "How to develop one's own leadership abilities."

2. Fifty-seven percent said they needed much or very much training in "A knowledge of the techniques of selecting and training leaders."

3. Fifty-five percent felt they needed much or very much training in "How to involve people in the study and analysis of their problems."

4. Fifty-two percent said they needed much or very much training in "How to determine the leadership resources within a group."

**Review of Selected Group Dynamics Concepts**

Major emphasis is given to this section because it represents one of the three major sources of objectives in the Tyler Model. An intensive review of literature was made in the field of group dynamics to select the most important concepts which have implications for Extension group work. The following is a discussion of the 35 concepts selected for analysis in this study.

**Power structure.** Haiman states that "with respect to human beings . . . patterns of dominance and submission whether overt or subtle, eventually emerge in all social groups (36:359)." These patterns may be formalized in terms of a recognized leader, or members may not even be consciously aware that the power structure exists.

The influence patterns are not necessarily permanent and often are altered by changing situations (36). Zaleznik and M. Moment (87) have
found that power structure often changes with a change in the nature of the task. Changes in power structure also tend to bring about changes in the communication patterns in a group (124, 104). The most influential members tend to communicate more.

Phillips (71) and Argyle (2) both point out that in many groups the first task is to determine a hierarchy of status and roles. There are often struggles for status among individuals strong in dominance motivation. This period can be particularly difficult if members have had little or no previous contact.

Problems related to power structure can arise in groups and hinder performance. Disagreements may arise concerning an individual's status or power (69). Beal, Bohlen and Raudabaugh (9) indicate that feelings of insecurity can come about when power and status relationships are unclear in a group.

Group size. Group size affects both quantity and quality of interaction. Group size affects cohesion, conformity, consensus and member satisfaction (83, 46, 9). As group size increases each member has relatively less talking time, more relationships to maintain and less time to do it (6, 9).

Adverse factors of increased group size have been shown in many studies. As size increases there is evidence that more aggressive members take over and stifle contributions from others (69, 105, 131). Larger groups were found to be more disorderly, wasted more time and have more internal competition than smaller groups (131). Losses in
communication and increased hostility due to decreased feedback were also evident in large groups (69). Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh (9) also found increases in threat, frustration, tension, and increased difficulties in coordinating group activities.

The major advantage of a large group is that it provides greater resources available in terms of variety of personality and talent (38, 46, 2).

Many studies have been done to determine optimum group size. It has been found that optimum group size is related to the tasks of the group (9, 38). Thelen (133) found that ideal group size varied with the complexity of the task; smaller groups were more accurate and performed faster on concrete problems, while larger groups performed better on more abstract problems. Where goals and objectives are not well defined, Kemp (50) found that larger groups had more ideas and came up with more creative results than smaller groups.

For a small discussion group, many studies have demonstrated that five members is an ideal number (79, 69, 131, 38, 9, 2).

Seating arrangement. Patterns of seating in a group have been found to influence interaction among group members. There seem to be two major aspects to this phenomenon. First, under conditions of uncontrolled seating, the way group members arrange themselves tells a great deal about the power structure and interactions in the group (39). The second is that there is evidence that group performance can be enhanced greatly under certain circumstances by arranging seating positions.
Huse (46) points out that one can learn a great deal by observing the physical layout of a group. One can assume that participation is encouraged if chairs are arranged in a circle or around a table.

Russo (127) found that the more distant two people are from each other, the less friendly, the less well acquainted and the less talkative they tend to be toward each other. McCrosky and others (63) concluded that under uncontrolled situations, seating positions are usually not accidental. People sit opposite those with whom they desire frequent conversation.

Most studies seem to show that for maximum participation, circular or elliptical patterns are superior to other types of seating arrangements (9, 95, 78, 87).

**Interaction patterns.** Patterns of communication develop among group members that indicate power and status in a group, and also show how effectively member resources are being used (93). Groups that have adequate communication networks are usually more productive, have higher participation and member satisfaction than groups with poor structures (9).

Zoleznik and Moment (87) have provided a good framework for discussing interaction patterns. They state that interaction patterns as a structural property of a group should be divided into three elements: 1) quantification, 2) direction, and 3) content. The first two elements will be used for this discussion.
In terms of quantification of interaction, all group members share a certain amount of time, but not equally. Some members participate more than others. There is a definite relationship between the frequency of participation and the degree of influence and authority given to members (87). Low status members are usually not given much opportunity to talk (2).

A great deal of research has been done on the direction of interaction patterns, which is based on communication selectivity. Interaction tends to go in the direction of members who have slightly higher status and also share similar values (38).

Early work done in the area of interaction direction was performed by Bavelas (107). He looked at the effect of different communication patterns on group productivity. He found that where a central person existed, such as a leader, the work was completed more quickly and accurately; however, member satisfaction tended to be greater in a circular pattern with no central figure.

The concept of centrality from Bavelas' research has been looked into by other investigators. Studies have been made to determine relationships between centrality and other variables of group behavior (117, 129, 122, 130).

The presence or absence of effective two-way communication patterns have been found to affect group productivity. Without adequate feedback, members often feel left out or unsure of themselves, resentment can build between sender and receiver and hostility may appear (9, 38).
Cliqués or subgroups. Cliqués or subgroups often develop and can greatly influence group effectiveness (93). They are formed because certain individuals are seen to gratify one another's needs and interests, more so than the total group (19).

When the goals of the subgroups or cliqués become incompatible with those of the larger group, they become disruptive (19). Hall (37) states that a good way to wreck a group is to always encourage clique formation.

Hare (38) points out that as a group increases in size, there are greater tendencies to form subgroups. He found that groups of twelve members are more likely to split into conflicting subgroups than groups of six members.

Subgroup formation is not always disruptive. According to Cartwright and Zander (19), when the goals of the subgroups are the same or similar, subgroup formation may increase attractiveness to the larger group.

Interpersonal relations. Six concepts are discussed under this area. Broadly defined, interpersonal relations, or human relations skills, is the process of working and getting along with other people. There is evidence of great need for training in this area. Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh state that (9:110):

Too often it is assumed that since we have lived all our life with people, we must be proficient in human relations skills. Most of us, for example, have at least the minimum ability to disagree with another without creating open hostility. However, the difference between these socially accepted minimum skills and the skills needed for efficient group members functioning is great.
These skills can be learned and communicated, and their application has been found to increase group productivity and morale. Studies have shown that it is often more important for a leader to understand and be skillful in human relations skills than be proficient in the subject under discussion (9).

Interpersonal compatibility. A general definition of interpersonal compatibility, or interpersonal orientation, is that individuals in a group have different personalities, which can influence how they get along with one another. In everyday language, personality refers to social qualities of an individual, for example, how popular he or she is. Giffin and Patten give a good technical definition of personality (29:78).

Personality is here considered to be the basis for what our judgment of a person is, what is significant about him, and how he is likely to act in certain kinds of situations. It includes such items as his intellect, his values, his energy levels, his urges to certain kinds of behavior, and his technique for getting along with people.

There are many different approaches to studying interpersonal compatibility, indicating that the area is still being explored and has not become well stabilized. However, each approach provides valuable insights into how to improve one's human relations skills (29).

Griffitt (119) found indications that similarity of personality traits among group members tended to increase interpersonal attractiveness. Cattell (91) has listed 16 types of personality traits that could be used in this analysis.
The open-or closed-mindedness of a person has been shown to affect how he receives attempts to communicate with him. A closed-minded person maintains a rigid belief system and sees a great discrepancy between his belief and one that differs from his own (29). Karen Horney (43), a psychiatrist, asserts that neurotic problems may be seen as disturbances in interpersonal relations. She has classified people into three major interpersonal response traits: 1) those people who move toward others, 2) those who move away from others, and 3) those who move against others.

One of the most elaborate and systematic approaches to the study of interpersonal orientations has been developed by William Schutz (76). He has tried to identify ways in which people characteristically orient themselves toward others. His work has been based on the analysis of a large number of research studies. From these studies he has identified three major areas: 1) inclusion, 2) control, and 3) affection. Each is divided into two parts: the behavior an individual expresses toward others, and the degree to which he wants the behavior directed toward him.

Inclusion relates to the entrance into association with others. Some individuals always actively seek group participation, while others have a "stand-offish" attitude toward working with others. Control is related to power and influence in a group. Some people desire power over others, while others are content to be directed. Affection is concerned with the need to like and be liked by others.
People differ greatly in their need to like others and be liked by others. For satisfactory interpersonal relations a balance must be established between behavior expressed and the amount one desires to receive (77).

**Stereotype.** Stereotype is a more specific form of the general concept interpersonal perception. It appears to be one of the most important concepts in the literature on interpersonal perception.

Much has been learned recently from the behavioral sciences to explain this phenomenon. A major point is that perception is not, as was once thought, simply two elements, the perceiver and the thing perceived. "Each of us perceives what our past has prepared us to perceive; we select and distinguish, we focus on some subjects and relationships, and we blur others; we distort objective reality to make it conform to our needs or hopes or fears or hates or envies or affections (69:35)."

Katz describes why we often tend to place people in rigid categories according to our first impressions (49:245):

> Whether or not nature abhors a vacuum, the human mind abhors the sense of helplessness that would result if it were forced to admit its inability to understand and deal with people and situations beyond its comprehension. What people do is to fill the gap with their own preconceptions and to spread their own limited attitudes and ideas to cover all the world beyond their own knowledge.

Gage and Cronbach (27) also found that people tend to base their perceptions of others in terms of global impressions.
Stereotype prejudices often carry with them heavy emotional dimensions, which are very resistant to fact and logic (49).

By not being aware that stereotyping exists, interpersonal and communication difficulties can develop in a group. Benne (11) points out that group members should be made aware of the nature of stereotyping and struggle through the habit of stereotyping one another.

Interpersonal trust. Effective group interaction has been found to increase when members readily give acceptance and a sense of genuineness to others (73, 57).

Major variables that seem to influence interpersonal trust in groups are the abilities to share and risk. Are we willing to share a little of ourselves with others? Are we willing to risk exposure of ourselves to others? In our Western culture there is severe emphasis on one's ability to protect his self-image. The protection of one's self-concept in interpersonal relation is closely related to the trust of those with whom one interacts. Self confidence in interpersonal relations can be thought of in terms of exposure of one's self-image to evaluation by others (29).

Rogers (73) has presented evidence to show that only when a person trusts his listeners is he willing to expose himself. Self confidence also affects the concept that one has of others. If I tend to like others, I tend to like myself (16).

Empathy. Empathy is the ability to understand another person, his feelings, attitudes, and sentiments (63). Phillips (70) points out that this is one of the most valuable traits a member of a
discussion group can have. According to Marlow (61), understanding and sharing are the important elements of empathy.

Deutsch (23) states that this ability is usually underdeveloped in most people and it is further impaired by inadequate information and stress that can circulate in a group. The inability to empathize can become one of the major sources of conflict in a group (70).

Phillips (70) points out that unfortunately there is no way to learn empathy. However, a group can practice voluntary suppression of the results of lack of empathy. Group members can avoid verbalizing hostile judgments of others.

**Member roles.** Patterns of behavior develop in groups which characterize an individual's place in the group. These roles must be played to promote effective group growth and productivity. Hall (37) points out that one of the major reasons for group failure is a lack of knowledge and skill in playing group roles.

Giffin and Patton (69) state that a role is a product of the interaction process. It is not an attribute of an individual, but comes about through interaction with others. They point out that roles individuals play are products of the demands of the group, the interaction among the different interpersonal orientations and the various elements of the situation. The way an individual plays a role is influenced by his self-concept, his knowledge of the role, his motivation to play the role, and the other people in the group.

According to Lippitt and Seashore (93), the ability of a group to perform well is not necessarily dependent on the leader. The
effective leader should realize and help the other members to realize that playing roles to contribute to the task of leadership is the responsibility of all members.

Group member roles have been divided into three major areas for analysis: 1) task role, 2) building and maintenance roles and 3) individual roles. This classification was first established by the National Training Laboratory in Group Development in 1948 (108). Each of the above will be discussed as the first three concepts under the area group member roles.

Patten and Giffin have listed some of the problems that groups seem to have with member role functions (69:252):

1. Inability to agree on who can perform the needed leadership functions.
2. Poor relationship between a member's personality and his role requirements.
3. Neglect of either task or maintenance function.
4. Inappropriate or inefficient attempts at performing leadership functions.

Before the specific concepts are discussed it is important to look at the work of Robert F. Bales (4), who has integrated all the behavior in a method of analyzing patterns of role behavior. In 1950, he and his co-workers developed a set of categories which systematically classified acts of participation in a group. Twelve acts constituted the system, where an 'act' is any verbal or nonverbal communication noted by an observer. The acts are divided into two areas, a task area and a socio-emotional area, which can be considered the building and maintenance functions.
An observer can tabulate the relative frequencies of the following acts (59:123):

1. Shows solidarity, raises other's status, gives help, rewards
2. Shows tension release, jokes, laughs, shows satisfaction
3. Agrees, shows passive acceptance, understands, concurs, complies.
4. Gives suggestions, direction, implying autonomy for others
5. Gives opinion, evaluation, analysis, expresses feeling, wishes
6. Gives orientation, information, repeats, clarifies, confirms
7. Asks for orientation, information, repetition, confirmation
8. Asks for opinions, evaluation, analysis, expression of feeling
10. Disagrees, shows passive rejection, formality, withholds help
11. Shows tension, asks for help, withdraws out of field
12. Shows antagonism, deflates other's status, defends or asserts self.

Task roles. There are certain roles in a group that are directly related to accomplishing group goals. Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh have outlined the types of task roles that are performed in effective problem solving groups (9:103-105):

1. the initiator-contributor
2. the information seeker
3. the opinion seeker
4. the information giver
5. the opinion giver
6. the elaborator
7. the summarizer
8. the coordinator-integrator
9. the orienter
10. the disagreeer
11. the evaluator-critic
12. the energizer
13. the procedural technician
14. the recorder.

Patton and Giffin suggest task roles of a good leader (69:68):

helping set and clarify goals, focusing on information needed, drawing upon available group resources, stimulating research, maintaining orderly operating procedures, introducing suggestions when they are needed, establishing an atmosphere that permits testing, rigorously evaluating ideas, devoting oneself to the task, attending to the clock and the schedule, pulling the group together for consensus or patterns of action, and enabling the group to determine and evaluate its progress.

Building and maintenance roles. Like task roles, building and maintenance roles are essential for effective group functioning. The primary function of these roles are to "... allow the group to build and maintain itself by helping to satisfy members' needs and fostering trust and cooperation among group members (46:119)."

Building and maintenance roles are often overlooked when member roles are considered, since so much emphasis is given to task completion. Until recently it had been assumed that rational problem solving tasks could be separated from emotional concerns. Huse (46) points out that this neglect of emotional concerns is probably one of the most important factors in reducing group effectiveness.

Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh have outlined member functions related to building and maintenance roles (9:106-107):

1. the encourager
2. the harmonizer
3. the compromiser
4. the gate keeper and expediter
5. the standard setter
6. the group observer and commentator
7. the follower

In terms of leader functions in building and maintenance activities, Patton and Giffin state that (69:68):

the group-maintenance functions of the leader include encouraging participation by everyone in the group, keeping everyone in a friendly mood, responding to the emotional concerns of group members when that is appropriate, promoting open communication, listening attentively to all contributions, encouraging with positive feedback, showing enthusiasm and good humor, promoting pride in the group, judging accurately the changing moods of the group and providing productive outlets for tensions.

Individual roles. Sometimes individuals play selfish roles that only serve to satisfy their own personal needs. Schutz (77) states that this can become one of the most difficult interpersonal problems that can face a group. He points out that usually the overactive and the underactive members cause problems. Huse (46) identifies the behavior of attention-getting, domination, aggression and withdrawal as attempts to meet self-serving needs.

Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh list eight types of behavior that characterize individual self-serving roles: 1) the aggressor, 2) the blocker, 3) the recognition-seeker, 4) the self-confessor, 5) the playboy, 6) the dominator, 7) the help-seeker, and 8) the special interest pleader (9:108).

There are many recommendations in the literature on how to handle problem members. Beal, Bohlen and Raudabaugh (9) recommend that group member training is needed if there is a high incidence of
"individual-centered" behavior in contrast to "group-centered" behavior. The training could be in the form of group self-evaluation. Some of the causes of self-serving type behavior are low levels of skill among members and the leader, low levels of group maturity, and authoritativeness or laissez-faire attitudes toward group functioning.

Mann (60) presents a lengthy discussion on how to handle problem members. He analyzes in depth some of the probable causes and makes specific recommendations.

Role conflict. Tensions may arise among group members because of differences in expectation of certain roles. Seeman (128) points out that role conflict usually arises from three sources: 1) within the group there can be agreement on the expected behavior, but the expectations may be too difficult; 2) a lack of agreement on role definition; and 3) the expectations may be in conflict with those of other groups to which the individual belongs.

Ill-defined roles seem to be a primary cause of role conflict (82). Conflict arises when a member is not motivated to productive action, because he cannot see how his role relates to other roles or group achievement (9).

The three major sub-concepts usually discussed in the literature with role conflict are: role confusion, which results from ill-defined roles; role collision, when two individuals in a group have roles that overlap and; role incompatibility, when an individual is required to meet expectations for different roles which are incompatible (38).
Stogdil (82) points out that high status individuals in a group are more subject to role conflict than low status members. Bertrand (13) asserts that role conflict has been shown to be a normal and ever-present element of social systems.

**Social power.** Certain individuals in a group have the ability to influence the thinking, feelings, and behavior of other group members (36). Social power has been thought of in terms of both power and influence. It has been found that influence derived from the group itself has been more effective than power derived from sources outside of the group. Power tends to be less stable and dependent on outside factors.

**Leadership.** Leadership is the act of guiding and coordinating group members. It is an extremely broad, integrative concept that relates directly or indirectly to all group dynamics concepts. There is little need to stress its extreme importance to group work. The following will be a discussion of some of the important sub-concepts that appear in the literature.

How does leadership appear in a group? A leader may be appointed to a group from an outside authority. If so, he is usually vested with power given to him to exercise control over the group. Often members feel resentment toward this type of leader.

Another type of leader is one that is formally selected by the group, usually through an election. He is generally respected by the members and relies on influence to guide the group (74).
If no leader is appointed or selected, often a leader will informally emerge from the group itself to play leadership roles. This is called "emergent leadership" (74, 9).

Leadership roles can be played by all members of a group. When leadership roles are distributed throughout the group, this is usually termed "shared leadership". There is evidence that this is the best type of leadership for small discussion groups (69). Related to this, Lippitt and Seashore (93) emphasize that even if there is a designated leader, the performance of all necessary roles in the group should be the responsibility of all members.

Leadership style has been another important area of study. Fiedler (25) defines leadership style as the mode of a leader relating to and interacting with group members.

One major classification of leadership style has been: 1) autocratic, 2) laissez-faire, and 3) democratic. The autocratic leader controls the behavior of group members through the use of power. The laissez-faire leader does not intervene into the affairs of the group unless called upon. The democratic leader makes use of the motivational forces within the group to control member behavior (10).

In a classic study of this type of leadership style, Lippitt and Lewin (56) found that there were greater accomplishments and social solidarity in groups with democratic leaders than in groups with autocratic leaders. Much frustration and resentment were present with autocratic leaders. Other researchers have found similar results (54, 71, 26, 98, 72, 46).
Another major classification of leadership style has been put forth by Fiedler (25) in his contingency model of leadership. He suggests that leaders are either human relations oriented or task oriented in their group work. To the task oriented leader, the task is all important, while the human relations oriented leader directs his interest to maintaining good member relations, high morale, and job satisfaction.

The other three variables that go into the contingency model are: 1) personal relations between the leader and group members, 2) the degree to which the leadership position gives power over group members and 3) the structuredness of the tasks before the group (24).

Based on many studies, Fiedler's major contention is that either style of leadership can be effective depending on the combination of the other variables. He has concluded that human relations oriented leaders are most effective when leader-member relations are good, the task is unstructured and the leader position has little power. Regardless of his power, this type of leader is also effective when the task is structured and the leader-member relations are poor (24).

Task oriented leaders work well when the task is structured and when there are good leader-member relations, and also with poor leader-member relations when the task is unstructured regardless of the power associated with high leader position (24).

Leadership training. Leadership training can be thought of as a process of stimulating leaders in their efforts to develop attitudes and skills and acquire knowledge to improve their performance as
leaders (141). This concept is also referred to as leadership development.

A good procedure for leadership development has been suggested by Dolan and Smith (141) specifically for 4-H work. This same procedure can be applied to other types of Extension groups. There are seven major steps in the process: 1) leader identification, 2) leader selection, 3) leader orientation, 4) leader training, 5) leader utilization, 6) leader recognition, and 7) evaluation.

Knowles (92) has outlined suggested contents for a leader training program. Among other things he states that leaders should understand why individuals and groups act the way they do, and also understand his own behavior in terms of his goals, motivation, needs and prejudices as a leader. He needs to have a genuine desire to understand other members, their problems, needs and perceptions. If a group is not functioning well, he should be able to diagnose what is going wrong. He also needs to know how to help others improve their competencies.

Dolan and Smith (141) suggest that training for 4-H leaders should be in leader skills in understanding human behavior, the subject matter and the area of organizational tasks.

Both Marlow (61) and Hare (38) have demonstrated effectiveness of leader training in the improvement of leader behavior.

One final point should be made that has been emphasized by Benne (88) and Knowles and Knowles (52), that leader training is often not enough. They feel that leader training should not be
separated from group training. Leadership in a group often shifts or the situation changes. Where an entire group has received training there is less disruption from change, in contrast to groups where only the designated leader received training.

**Evaluation.** Evaluation is a formal or informal process of determining progress toward group goals. Leaders who make greater use of evaluation procedures have been found to be more effective than leaders who do not (9). The two major types of evaluation are summative and formative.

**Formative evaluation.** Formative evaluation is a continuous evaluation of a group to determine rate of progress, direction of the goal, and the group's position on the path toward the goal (48). The focus of this type of evaluation should be on process concerns as well as content concerns.

Often members realize that there are problems in a group, but they are not aware of the exact nature of the difficulties. Sometimes aggression results or members withdraw psychologically because of apathy or boredom (48). Often these problems can be resolved by analyzing the processes of the group through formative evaluation.

This type of evaluation requires an effective feedback mechanism to provide information concerning group progress. There are several approaches to obtain feedback. The simplest, and quite possibly the least effective, is to make every group member aware of the need to be concerned with how the group is functioning. Comments can be presented as the need arises. The weakness of this approach is that
while participating a member generally becomes too concerned with the content of discussion, to pay much attention to how the group is functioning (37).

The use of a participant observer has been found to be very helpful (37). He is usually a member of the group, but does not participate in the discussion. He is assigned the specialized task of observing and later reporting to the group (48). The participant observer has been found to increase democratic forces in the group. He can be on the lookout for too powerful members and the rejection of other members (44).

Another approach to feedback has been the use of a "maintenance stop." At a predetermined time or whenever the need is felt, members stop their content discussion to spend five to ten minutes talking about how they are progressing. The advantage of this approach is that it does not take a potential contributor to the content discussion out of participation. Participant observer and "maintenance stop" techniques can be combined.

**Summative evaluation.** Summative evaluation is a comparison of the group's finished product with the group goal to determine how well the group has accomplished its objectives. This concept is fairly straightforward, however, it is often overlooked.

Essential to this type of evaluation is the setting of standards beside which the accomplishments of the group can be measured. Groups which do not have clearly stated goals and objectives have difficulty measuring success or failure.
Criteria for evaluating group effort has been suggested by Bass (7) and Cohen (20).

Social control. Social control is a process by which individuals or groups bring pressure on an individual to force him to behave in a certain way. It can be thought of as formal, as when rules and regulations are imposed by a larger organization, or informal such as the pressures operating in a small group (38).

Group norms. In a group there are stated and/or unstated rules of behavior that have been accepted as legitimate by the group and specify the kinds of behavior expected of members. Norms are ideas in members' minds about what should and should not be done (42), they represent attitudes and values of a group (46) and shared acceptance of rules (66).

Norms maintain stability and predictability of interpersonal relationships in groups (80, 69). They may be dysfunctional such as habits of being late for meetings, or absenteeism (69).

Ostrander and Snyder (125) discuss the importance of norms and their implications for Extension youth work. The same ideas are applicable to other Extension audiences as well. When giving a presentation (125:30-31):

It is important to determine as accurately as possible the norms held by the audience before making a presentation. A critical skill needed by the change agent working with an adolescent group is the ability to accurately diagnose the degree of congruity between the program and the youth's present norms. Also, knowledge of the extent to which the prevailing norm is entrenched is essential. The accuracy of the diagnosis will determine the effectiveness of any approach.
Group standards are so closely related to group norms that they are discussed as the same concept by many authors. However, some distinctions are made. Group standards are often thought of as levels of performance that are set by the group and expected of each member.

**Conformity pressure.** Conformity pressure is a force coming from the group itself that makes individuals conform to the norms of the group. Members whose values and attitudes differ greatly from those of the group must learn to accept the norms, change their own values, or drop out of the group (46).

The means of bringing about conformity pressure is through the exercise of sanctions. Sanctions may take the form of rewards or punishments. Rewards might include being elected to an office, or being recognized before the group. Less tangible rewards might be a smile, a pat on the back, and a feeling of being accepted by the group. Punishments often take the form of rejection, ridicule, taking away privileges or actual physical acts against the offender (9).

Cartwright (17) states that an understanding of conformity pressure is essential when trying to achieve change in groups. There will be strong resistance to any change if it makes an individual deviate from the accepted norms of the group.

He points out that this is one reason why efforts to change people by taking them from the group and giving them special training has not met with much success. They often display increased tensions and aggressiveness when they go back to the group. If they really
want to belong to the group, they cannot withstand the pressures to conform to the group. Those that have received this special training often form cliques with others who have shared the same training (17).

Another important point is that the more cohesive the group, the greater is the pressure to conform to the norms. Where groups are extremely cohesive, conformity pressure tends to stifle individuality and creativity among members (18).

Conflict. Wide differences in wants and opinions create tensions among group members. Deutsch (23) points out that conflicts arise because of differences in interests, desires, values, information or beliefs. It may also result from a scarcity of resources or rivalry where one person tries to outdo the other.

A characteristic of damaging conflict is that there is a tendency for it to expand and escalate, even after the initiating causes have been forgotten or become irrelevant (23). Depending on the situation, conflict can bring out the best in a group or tear it apart. Conflict is inevitable in groups and it can be functional or destructive (69).

Productive conflict. Not all conflict is damaging to a group. Some is useful for improving discussion and creating new ideas. There are indications that some forms of conflict prevent stagnation in a group, stimulate interests and curiosity and provide opportunities for innovation and creativity (23, 69).
Kemp stresses the fact that for conflict to be handled creatively one must understand how it comes about (51:262):

1. Productive conflict arises because group members are so bound together that their actions affect one another . . .

2. Conflict occurs because people care. Often group members who have great creative differences share a very deep relationship. Because they care about one another and the group as a whole, they are willing to make, if necessary, a costly emotional response to help improve a situation.

3. Each member has different needs and values. Their differences become evident and produce conflict unless the members repress their individual differences and assign the direction of the group to an authority figure. . .

Patton and Giffin (69) mention that the integrative type of conflict has positive benefits for the group, but only when members feel comfortable can it safely emerge.

Conflict resolution. Conflict resolution is a formal or informal mechanism for reducing or eliminating damaging conflict in a group. It can be thought of in terms of preventive as well as corrective measures. As can be imagined, it is often easier to prevent damaging conflict than it is to reduce or eliminate it once erupted.

One of the most common types of conflict that can develop in a group is often described as a "win-lose situation". Two parties within a group, whether individuals or subgroups, take sides on an issue. They are not willing to give in at all because they came to view the situation as a contest between their side and the "wrong side" where the goal is victory (70). A feeling develops that there
must be a winner and a loser, when in most cases both sides could come out winners. What often could be a win-win situation turns into a lose-lose situation (71).

The first step in resolving this type of conflict is to be aware that the group is headed for a "win-lose situation". An attempt should be made to make sure that the goals are clear, understood and agreed upon by all. Members must be encouraged to listen carefully. They must be willing to take the risk of being persuaded (144).

Group members should avoid statements that leave no room for modification. When compromises are agreed to, one should test to be sure they are agreed upon by all. Members should work toward consensus type decisions. A rule can be made that when an idea is presented, the first comments about it must be positive (144).

Another approach to conflict resolution is to find areas of agreement among conflicting parties and try to work from there. Members must be made to understand that interaction is a give-and-take situation. They might have to subordinate some of their own goals for the good of the group (71).

Sometimes conflicts can be resolved if interpersonal difficulties are openly discussed. Sometimes emotions and personality conflicts are confused with the central topic under discussion (69).

Members should be helped to better understand themselves and their needs. This might help them to understand their reaction toward others (77).
Phillips has suggested ways a leader can help prevent and resolve group conflict (70:33):

The leader . . . can specify ground rules so that conflict can be made constructive. He can discourage attacks on personalities and prevent polarization of the group into hostile factions.

An Extension Agent should be able to determine when productive conflict changes to disintegrative conflict. According to Gage and Cronbach, the following patterns of change are typical (27:298):

When the agreement moves from the issues to the personalities; . . . when a speaker identifies himself so thoroughly with an issue that criticism of it is construed as an attack on him; when one participant fails to deal with a question or agreement raised by another who continues to call attention to the failure; when inaccuracy or falsification is charged; when there are discrepancies in the assertions of 'the' facts, etc.

**Interpersonal communication.** Interpersonal communication is the process where individuals send and receive information to and from each other on a face-to-face basis. There is much evidence to indicate that effective communications in groups improves functioning (74).

Communication can be verbal or nonverbal such as posture, facial expressions or gestures. Leary (55) points out that often interpersonal communications are expressed as a reflex action. They occur automatically and are often at variance with a subject's own perception of them.

The process of interpersonal communications has been found to be very complex. At least six messages are considered to be involved in any exchange between two people: 1) what you mean to say, 2) what
you actually say, 3) what the other person hears, 4) what the other person thinks he hears, 5) what the other person says, and 6) what you think the other person says (101:3). With so many messages it is easy to see why misunderstandings occur.

One of the most important barriers to interpersonal communications in the group setting is poor listening skill, which will be discussed next.

**Listening.** Often poor communication results because group members don't pay close attention and are not fully aware of what is being said. Gorman (32) suggests that at first glance, it seems absurd to think of developing listening skills. Listening is an obvious part of everyday life. However, many studies have shown that people generally do not listen well. They tend to anticipate what is going to be said instead of listening to what is actually said. An individual tends to listen only for what he wants to hear. Because of different perceptual reactions, each group member may receive a different message from the same speaker (21).

Wordin (138) has developed a scheme for analyzing different levels of listening. The lowest level of listening is hearing; where what is spoken is comprehended but there is no reaction to it. At the second level, listening, more attention is paid to the speaker, but still there is very little response to what is being said. Auding, the highest level, means that one listens critically and appreciatively. It is a creative type of listening.
This highest level of listening has often been called empathic listening; listening with understanding. Listening empathetically takes time and requires a special effort (58). It is extremely important characteristic for a leader (31).

Listening empathetically requires courage. When we listen with understanding, we run the risk of being changed. Gordon (31) points out that many psychological studies have shown that if one is willing to risk listening with understanding, this facilitates change in the other person as well.

Another important point is that empathic listening encourages a speaker to present his ideas more clearly (31).

Gorman (32) suggests that good listening is the mutual responsibility of both the speaker and the listener. He states that listening skills should be thought of in terms of mutual clarification and concentration.

Group goals. Group goals are not just the simple sum of individual member goals. They have as their aim a desirable state for the group, not just the individual (65). Patton and Giffin describe the process of group goal formation (69:147):

As the group works on the identification of a specific goal, it will be apparent that what is exactly the concern of some members is not exactly the concern of other members. As members attempt to clarify the area of primary group concern, they must be prepared to make minor adjustments and compromise with each other in order, eventually, to adopt a goal that meets the concerns of most and to which all members can make a functional commitment.
Goals can be long, medium, or short ranged, they can be clear or unclear, they vary to the value the group places on them, they can be imposed on the group or emerge from within the group and they can be realistic or unrealistic in terms of available resources (93).

Group goals define the groups ends; they provide the criteria by which progress is measured; they provide a basis for rational decisions about types and number of activities. When effective, they give members identity, provide motivation, meaningful participation and member satisfaction (9).

The entire group should help establish goals, rather than a small subgroup or the leader. Studies have shown that when goals are determined by the entire group there is greater motivation and closer identity with the objectives of the group (9).

**Goal clarity.** There are different degrees to which group goals may be understood by all group members. Benne and Muntyar (12) point out that lack of goal clarity, as seen by members and the leader of the group, is a principal danger to the group process.

Patton and Giffin state that goal specificity cannot be over-emphasized. Their work in observing and counseling task groups has led them to make the following observation: "... groups fail, bog down, lose member commitment, and develop interpersonal dislike and irritation more because of lack of specific goal identification than for any other reason (69:148)." Peterson (95) mentions the same type of behavior in problem solving groups when goals are not clear. In a conference for Maryland Extension Agents, Waetjen (102) stated that
one of the major difficulties in working with groups is that often goals are not articulated.

Goal difficulty. There are different degrees of difficulty in completing group goals. It is important for a group to decide on how difficult a task to tackle.

There are dangers in a group picking a goal that is too difficult. Zander (86) found that participation decreases when groups fail much more often than when they succeed. Their group cohesiveness or solidarity may decrease (46).

A too easy goal usually does not bring enough satisfaction to make the venture worthwhile. Therefore, a group, according to Marlowe (61) is most likely to choose a goal of moderate difficulty. Accomplishing the goal produces satisfaction without the risk of failure from a much more difficult goal.

Zander (86) points out that there are two group-oriented motives; the desire for group success and the desire to avoid group failure. He states that a group is more likely to choose a difficult goal, because success would be more satisfying and a failure less repulsive than a very easy goal.

Goal congruity. There are different degrees to which individual member goals are similar or complementary to group goals. Individuals come into a group with their own set of personal goals and objectives. The greater these personal goals overlap with the group goals, the stronger will be member motivation (9).

Phillips (71) states that the most popular leader is one who permits individual as well as group goals to be achieved, when the circumstances allow.
Consensus. A decision making process where everyone agrees on a course of action as best for the group, whether or not a person as an individual agrees with it (77).

It must be realized that consensus does not mean 100 percent agreement of all members. Littrell (94) indicates that in community development work, 100 percent consensus can only be achieved in the abstract. Consensus is used instead of majority. Majority implies 51 percent, while consensus means general agreement.

Consensus requires very careful interpersonal communication. Some personal feelings and desires must be surrendered to the welfare of the group. The important thing is that there should be no minority that sulks in silent opposition. The final agreement must include the ideas of all (70).

Consensus can be a problem sometimes. As many facts should be made available as possible. Even though according to Whale and Boyle (137), decisions are not always made by reason alone.

Problems often arise in groups when decisions are made without a consensus. Decisions can usually be made quickly by majority vote, but delays will often result because minority members have ways of resisting (77).

It is important that all objections be heard. If an objector is allowed to speak he might go along with the final decision. He might also express some objections that others in the group have but were not aware of (77).
Zolenik and Moment (87) look at consensus in terms of personal commitment of the members toward the group decision. Even if some members don't personally agree with the decision, they will accept it and carry out their part. Lack of consensus means a low degree of commitment.

**Participation.** Participation is the degree to which group members apply time and effort to group activities (74). Participation is usually thought of in terms of overt acts of speech and action, however it also includes the personal and psychological involvement of group members in the affairs of the group (9).

Leagans (122) has stated that in "free choice" programs such as those offered by Extension, participation is based on how well the programs satisfy needs as people see them. Extension programs are only successful to the extent that they meet audience needs.

The discipline of psychology has offered insight into the nature of participation. Osborn (68) states that it is important to recognize that people enter new experiences, such as a group, both wanting and fearing it. He talks in terms of resistance to group participation. Osborn points out that people generally have a hard time choosing between alternatives, because they have these two feelings about a variety of life situations. The fact that a person will come to a meeting does not mean that he wholly wants to come. In order to gratify some needs he attends the meeting, while at the same time he is denying other needs. If the other needs become stronger he will
probably decide against participation. Anyone working with groups should be aware that there are usually forces for and against participation within an individual.

Maslow's (62) hierarchy of needs provides some insight into reasons for lack of participation. His hierarchy is made up of five levels: physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Lower level needs must be satisfied before higher level needs become important. Perhaps an individual is not greatly concerned about satisfying his belonging needs in a group because he still feels insecure in the group.

Audrey (3) has suggested the existence of a dynamic triad to gain a better understanding of participation. The triad includes identity, stimulation, and security. A group to encourage participation, must provide for all three needs. A member should feel secure in the group; he must not feel threatened. To maintain his interest he must be emotionally and intellectually stimulated. There is also a need for identity; to transfer attention from "I" to "we".

Some of the blocks to participation include members who find goals unimportant, lack of problem-solving skills, members who feel they contribute little and interpersonal conflict among members (112). Other blocks include fear of rejection or ridicule, members may feel they can't live up to the expectation of the group, they may not understand the group goals, they may feel they don't have enough time or that they are of lower status than other members (9).
Group techniques. Group techniques include the means and methods for bringing about group action. The proper use of techniques is a powerful tool in activating individual motivations and moving a group toward its goals (9).

Techniques may be formal pre designed patterns for member interaction or they may be spontaneous informal techniques. Group techniques must be thought of as a means to an end. In some organizations the technique itself becomes the end (9).

Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh (9) discuss in detail 17 types of techniques commonly used in group work. There are several factors that should be considered when selecting a technique to use: the individual members, the internal dynamics of the group, group characteristics, goals or objectives, and the dynamics of the particular technique (9, 89).

Group formation. Group formation involves the bringing together of individuals with a wide variety of needs, values, and skills into a productive group. Shaw defines group formation as "... the establishment of a relationship between two or more persons (78:85)."

Member affiliation represents the major idea of group formation. Why do people join groups? Gordon (30) points out that group membership is not usually by chance, because people actively seek relationships that satisfy certain needs.

Shaw (78) discusses four major reasons why people join groups: 1) people are attracted to other people, 2) they are interested in the activities of the group, 3) they identify closely with the goals
and objectives of the group, and 4) they like the status associated with being a member of a certain group.

Another consideration is what type of group will be formed. Huse (46) points out that the three major types of groups are formal, informal, and social. Each type has different structures and purposes.

Group development. Group development involves the growth of a group from its inception to the final attainment of its goals. A group is constantly changing and adjusting to new situations. Researchers have identified stages through which a group passes in order to analyze the group development process.

Before a discussion of the stages, some general comments will be made concerning group development. The group development process usually takes a moderately long period of time and generally never reaches a stable state. Early development is oriented toward structuring and organization with the formation of norms and status, role, and power relations (78).

Rules of behavior are usually set during the early meetings. Sometimes rules are not established until a group bogs down for one reason or another (38). During the early life of the group there are usually major modifications, while later on the changes may be so slow they are hardly perceptible (78).

Bales and Stodbeck (106) outlined three major phases which a problem solving group passes: orientation, evaluation, and control.
Orientation refers to the stage where members gain an understanding of
the problem and information related to it. Evaluation is the phase
where group members make judgments about the information related to
the problem and alternative solutions to it. Control refers to the
regulation of the members in terms of abiding by the decisions made
by the group.

Thelen and Dickerman (134) have proposed a four stage model of
group development. The four stages are: 1) self-centered stage,
2) frustration and conflict stage, 3) consolidation and harmony stage,
and 4) individual self-assessment stage.

Another major theory of group development has been prepared by
Shutz (77). He feels that no matter what a group's composition or
function, if given enough time, every group will go through three
interpersonal phases, inclusion, control, and affection, in the same
sequence.

Bennis and Shepard (109) have also studied group development.
They suggest that there are two major phases of group development:
dependence and interdependence. The first deals with problems of
defining goals, setting norms, evolving power structure; all of which
cause frustration and anxieties. The second phase is related to
problems of sharing responsibilities.

Problem solving. Problem solving is a systematic process of
defining a problem searching for alternative solution, and choosing
the best solution.
Hoffman (41) points out that prevention of free expression of ideas is a major barrier to effective problem solving. Phillips (70) feels that the problem solving process often bogs down because group members are not sure what is expected of them. Whether it makes sense or not, they may assume their job is to seek agreement. They may decide they must seek the one "true and good" solution and then agree they can't find it. Some members may assume the discussion is a contest between their side and the "wrong side", where the goal is victory.

Patton and Giffin (69) have emphasized strongly the importance of mutual concern in the problem solving situation. Too frequently group members assume they are all working toward the same goal and have the same concerns. Mutual concern should be verified. Before discussion starts each individual should openly state how he feels about the situation. He should discuss his feelings, perceptions and any reservations he may have.

Some barriers to efficient problem solving include too early emphasis on possible solutions, lack of sufficient specific information, an assumption that the truth will emerge in democratic discussion regardless of the validity of the information and confusion between legitimate disagreement and personal dislike (69). Other factors that influence the inability of properly analyzing a problem include (69:252):

1) failure to compare what is with what is desired, 2) inability to agree on the scope of the problem, 3) inability to agree on the intensity or severity of the problem, 4) lack
of information on impelling forces (forces increasing the need for change), 5) lack of information on restraining forces (forces resisting the desired change), and 6) general lack of factual information regarding the problem . . .

**Group cohesiveness.** Group cohesiveness has been described as forces acting on members to stay in the group are greater than forces on them to leave the group (22). This has also been termed group identity (9), group attractiveness (7), and group solidarity (46).

Gross (34) points out the importance of this concept to an understanding of groups. Group cohesiveness, a primary area of research focus, "... attempts to grapple with a question that lies close to if not at the center of sociological problems: What is the nature of the social bond? What holds people together in groups? (34:63)."

Factors related to the attractiveness of members to their group include member's power position in the group (120), and group goals involving cooperative relationships (113). Factors related to forces away from the group appear to be poor group performance with respect to its goals (115), failure of some of the members to accept the group goal (116), and the presence of barriers to communication (126).

Research indicates that high cohesive groups allow free communication necessary for group effectiveness (48). Back (104), French (115) and Lott and Lott (123) found that there is greater communication among high-cohesive groups than among low-cohesive groups.
Many studies have shown that group cohesiveness is related to group performance (118, 135, 136, 79, 110, 112, 38).

Studies have found a circular relationship between cohesion and performance. Not only do cohesive groups appear to be more effective, but groups who experience success are more cohesive (78, 65).

There are also indications from the literature that high group cohesiveness can be an asset in overcoming conflict, both from within and outside the group (61, 48).

**Group homogeneity.** There are degrees to which individuals in a group are similar in terms of socially relevant characteristics, such as age, ethnic background, religious beliefs and socio-economic status (74). This also includes similarities of interests, abilities, attitudes and habits.

It is important for a group to have a certain base of homogeneity. There should be a basic core of similarity in a group. Cohesion is difficult in a group with widely differing values and statuses (79). The primary base for group formation should be similar interests and mutual concerns. The degree of similarity of interests might be affected by such things as age and socio-economic status. For example, 4-H Clubs are often divided into different age groups who tend to share similar interests.

Another important aspect is that a group can be too homogeneous. "If all members are alike, they may have little to talk about, they may compete with each other, or they may all commit the same mistake (79:118)." It can lead to an absence of stimulation in the group.
People from different backgrounds bring a wealth of variety to a group (94). A group must learn to recognize and mobilize differences for the benefit of the group (9).

**Group atmosphere.** Group atmosphere or group climate has been defined as the feelings, mood, or tone that permeates the group (74). It also includes the complex of beliefs, feelings and attitudes of group members (95).

Group atmosphere has been placed by many researchers on a continuum from a supportive or accepting climate to a defensive climate. A defensive atmosphere in a group can be a barrier to creative participation (31). Group members become afraid to say what they think and they become isolated from one another which tends to immobilize the group (95). Free communication is difficult where members are unable to disagree with others or expose their ideas (93).

A climate which reduces defensiveness and anxiety, and gives emotional support and acceptance is essential for learning (15). Climate influences the vigor with which a group progresses (95, 9). To be effective a group needs to develop an atmosphere of trust and security.

**Group maturity.** A mature group is characterized as efficient and productive with little damaging conflict. A mature group has learned to balance task and building and maintenance roles. Role conflict is reduced because in a mature group it usually doesn't matter who performs a particular role as long as it is performed (93).
Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh (9) have described an immature group as awkward and uncoordinated in behavior, frail communication and organizational structures, lack of goal clarity, unclear status relationships, poor cohesion, high incidence of personally centered roles, and high degree of emotional instead of rational behavior.

Haiman (35) lists 18 characteristics of a mature group.

Application of Group Dynamics Concepts to Extension Work

The following is a discussion of the application of selected group dynamics concepts to Extension group work. This is not an indepth, detailed, or complete discussion of all implications. The purpose is to demonstrate several ways in which these concepts can be used by Extension agents in their group work.

These concepts can be used by Extension agents to help groups in which they hold leadership positions perform more effectively. They can also be used by agents to train others to be more effective in group work, whether it be a designated leader or the group members.

A diagram was developed to discuss the application of the selected group dynamics concepts (see Figure 3). For the purpose of discussion the development of a group has been divided into three life stages: 1) early life (formative stage), 2) middle life (adjustment stage), and 3) mature life (productive stage). A group is constantly changing, rapidly at first and slower during later development. Early group life is characterized by organizational and structuring activities. Middle group life deals primarily with
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<th>EARLY LIFE (Formative Stage)</th>
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FIGURE 4. Group Development
interpersonal relations, conflict and productivity concerns. Both of these first two stages include anxieties, struggles, and frustrations.

Groups vary greatly in their rate of progress toward group maturity. Many groups do not even get past the first two stages of development. They stagnate or fall apart before reaching the productive stage. With an understanding and the ability to apply appropriate group dynamics concepts an Extension Agent can facilitate a group's passage through the group development process.

Before further discussion, it should be noted that many of the concepts are positioned on the diagram where they initially appear in importance. This does not mean that they are only important at that particular stage, because all elements of the concepts are constantly changing and remain important throughout the life of the group. It should also be kept in mind that these concepts are not isolated entities of themselves. On the contrary, most of the concepts are closely interrelated.

The first step in the group development process is group formation. Extension agents need to know about motivational factors behind member affiliation behavior. How does one go about forming a productive group of individuals with a wide variety of interests, skills, needs, and values? He should ask the following questions. Why will people want to join this group? Are the reasons for starting a new group enough to warrant the formation of a new group? Are these reasons felt strongly enough by potential members? An Extension agent needs a basic understanding of why people join groups.
Organizational and structuring activities take place early in group life. An understanding of the nature of certain group structure concepts can assist an agent help groups develop these structures with a minimum of disruption and conflict.

Power or influence structure is one of the first elements to evolve in the group. Influence, whether formalized or not, has been found to be a universal trait in social groups. In groups where the agent himself does not take over as leader and where no leader is appointed, a power struggle can develop among dominant individuals in order to gain top positions in the group. Some new groups waste time developing an influence structure, because they are not well acquainted with one another. In this situation, agents can facilitate power structure formation early in group life by providing situations for members to get to know each other. An agent can have the group members introduce themselves and tell about their background and interests.

Later on in group life, an agent should be on the lookout for disagreements concerning an individual's status or power. It may be necessary to formalize a power structure, through elections, to make group power positions clearly understood.

Group norms or standards are also set early in group life. Some norms, such as rules and regulations, may be verbally agreed upon by group members, while others are mutually accepted without verbal agreement. Extension agents should be on the lookout for dysfunctional
norms and try to change them before they become well-established. Examples of these norms include being late for meetings, discourtesy, and absenteeism.

When developing a program for clientele groups, Extension agents should try to learn about the norms of the group related to the change in behavior desired. A program will not be effective if it goes against strongly held norms of the group. The ability to diagnose group norms is a critical skill for Extension agents.

Interaction or communication patterns develop early in group life. By understanding the nature of these patterns, an Extension agent can gain insights into how well member resources are being used and the power and status structure in a group. Communication is usually directed to the most influential members of a group. Especially in discussion groups, effectiveness has been found to be related to how well communication is distributed throughout the group and not concentrated with one or a few individuals. Agents should attempt to get all group members to participate. It might be the person that never speaks up who has the best ideas. All human resources should be used in a group.

Goal setting should occur early in group life. A major reason for failure in many groups has been found to be that group goals are unclear. Extension agents should help groups define goals as clearly and specifically as possible so that they can be understood and agreed upon by all members.
The degree of difficulty of a goal has important implications for group success or failure. A very easy goal may be successfully completed, but members may drop out of the group because usually low levels of satisfaction are received for easy goals. On the other hand, goals that are too difficult might cause repeated failure and resultant member disenchantment. Extension agents should be aware of the implications of goal difficulty and guide groups in their selection of proper levels of difficulty of goals.

Goal congruity, or the degree to which individual member goals are similar or complementary to group goals, is an equally important consideration for Extension agents working with groups. Agents should be aware that usually there are different degrees to which members fully accept group goals. Members should be made aware that some sacrifice of personal goals might have to be made for the good of the group. If there are many members who do not seem to share the same goals, then perhaps a new group should be formed. The most highly motivated groups are those where individual goals are the same as group goals.

Member roles begin to develop in the formative stages of a group. Certain task, and building and maintenance roles have been identified as being important to group effectiveness. Many roles are performed automatically, however a group may not be functioning well because a critical role is not being played. Group effectiveness has been found to be adversely affected by lack of knowledge and
skills in playing group roles. Extension agents should help group members become aware of the major kinds of roles necessary for effective group functioning, and the expectations of each role. Agents should be aware of the fact that building and maintenance roles are often overlooked, however should be considered equally as important as task roles.

Seating arrangement can be extremely important to effective group interaction. An agent who has the seating arranged in a classroom style, with him as teacher up front and the audience in straight rows in the back, may wonder why there is a general lack of participation. When maximum participation is desired, Extension agents should have members sit in a circular or elliptical pattern.

Group size affects quality and quantity of member interaction. An agent should be aware of the problems associated with groups that are too small or too large, and try to make adjustments. In many open meeting situations, an agent has no control over group size. However, if discussion is desired he can split the group into smaller groups. An agent usually has control of the technique to be used with a group.

An Extension agent should become familiar with many types of group techniques. The use of a new technique could possibly revitalize a sagging group. An agent should try to use available techniques or invent new ones to fit his particular situation.
Stereotyping occurs early in group life and can affect later group functioning. Agents must encourage members not to make hasty judgments about others based on first impressions. It is typical for human beings to meet a person for the first time and place him in rigid categories such as: he is a nice guy, he seems to be a trouble maker, or he is so poorly dressed, he probably isn't very intelligent. At first we tend to see people as categories, not as individuals.

When members are not well known to each other, Extension agents should provide opportunities so that members can become better acquainted.

Leadership training should be started during the formative stages of group development. This can mean the actual identification, selection, and training of a 4-H adult or junior leader, or the training of all members in a group who share from time to time leadership responsibilities. An agent could use all of the 35 selected group dynamics concepts used in this study in such a training program.

The middle life, or the adjustment stage of group development, deals with interpersonal relationships, conflict and productivity concerns. Of primary interest is the specialized role of leadership. There is little need to emphasize the importance of this concept for Extension agents working with groups. It is directly related to each of the other concepts.

An important consideration of the concept leadership is the type of relationship that develops between the leaders and group members which has been called leadership style. Extension agents
should learn about different types of styles and their implications. For example, resentment often builds in a group when a leader tends to be too autocratic in his manner.

Interpersonal relations or human relation skills can influence greatly the effectiveness of group work. An understanding of the nature of interpersonal compatibility can be very useful to Extension agents working with groups. Personalities vary greatly among individuals. An agent can learn to become more sensitive to the interpersonal orientation of others and make adjustments in his own behavior, if deemed necessary, to improve communication. Perhaps an individual feels uneasy because the group situation has become too intimate. A problem can arise when there are too many personality types that want to lead and not enough that want to follow.

Empathy is the ability to understand another person's feelings, attitudes and values. It affects the way people interact with one another and can affect group performance. As has been pointed out, empathy cannot be learned, but Extension agents can ask group members to voluntarily suppress the results of lack of empathy by not making verbal hostile judgments against others.

Extension agents can often bring about effective group interaction by encouraging interpersonal trust among members. It has been mentioned that it is in the nature of our western culture to be defensive about our self-concept. To overcome this agents should encourage group members to get to know themselves better and gain more self-confidence.
Interpersonal trust requires a mutual risking and sharing among individuals. In order to be willing to expose ourselves to others, we must have an adequate self-image.

It is extremely important for change agents to understand the nature of conformity pressure. An agent can meet with strong resistance to change if it makes an individual deviate from the accepted norm of his group. In preparing a program, an Extension agent should try to gain an understanding of relevant norms and the strength of the conformity pressure on individuals to abide by these norms. Where group cohesion is excessively high, conformity pressure can become so strong that it encourages only one mode of behavior, and stifles individuality and creativity.

Conflict resolution has been said to be one of the most important skills a leader can have. Extension agents should learn to prevent and eliminate destructive conflict. For example, some of the measures that can be taken include avoiding attacks on personalities, the polarization of issues, and statements that leave no room for modification. Another approach involves finding areas of agreement among conflicting group members. Extension agents should gain understanding and skill in preventing conflict and handling conflict once it has erupted.

In an attempt to meet personal needs that are not in line with group goals, individuals often play self-serving roles that tend to disrupt group activities. It can become a very difficult problem to handle, especially when one does not want to hurt a person's feelings
or turn him against the group. Extension agents should learn to recognize types of self-serving behavior in groups. If such behavior arises, the cause or causes should be identified and appropriate action taken to improve the situation. Perhaps the group goals are unclear or were not agreed upon. Individual roles can be very disruptive and interfere with group efficiency and productivity.

Cliques or subgroups often develop and can greatly influence group effectiveness. If an Extension agent sees the formation of disruptive subgroups, he should try to find the causes. Perhaps there is a need to make the goals clearer. Maybe subgroups can be assigned tasks within the larger group that would be in line with their interests. If sharp conflicts arise in goals, depending on the circumstances, it might be wise to divide the group into two or more separate groups.

Agents should learn to realize that not all conflict is damaging. Some kinds of conflict improve discussion and create new ideas. When conflict moves from the issues under discussion to personalities damaging conflict usually results. A goal of an Extension agent or a group leader should not be to eliminate all conflict. There should be a differentiation between productive and damaging conflict. Productive conflict should be allowed and its creative potentialities encouraged.

Tensions may arise in a group because of difference in expectations of certain roles. Role conflict often arises because the expected behavior of the role is too difficult for the individual, there is
lack of agreement about the role expectations, or the role expectation maybe in conflict with those of other groups to which the individual belongs. Members are not motivated to perform when they cannot see how their role will contribute to group achievement or how their roles relate to those of other group members. Extension agents and leaders should help group members define and agree upon their respective roles in order to reduce possible role conflict that could adversely affect group performance.

The concept listening, or the lack of it, is considered one of the most important barriers to effective communication in groups. Generally group members do not listen well. Studies have shown that people often anticipate what a speaker will say, instead of what he actually says; they tend to hear only what they want to hear; and they tend to fill in gaps with what they think they hear.

An Extension agent should be aware of the importance of good listening skills and their implications for productive group work. Group members should be encouraged to listen empathetically with understanding. A good test to determine whether or not something was understood is to have someone in the group state in his own words what was said. An agent or leader should periodically restate what was said in the group to check for mutual understanding. Good listening in a group is the mutual responsibility of the speaker and the listener.

Problem solving as a systematic process of defining a problem, searching for alternative solutions, and choosing the best solution, is an extremely important concept to Extension group work. In the
problem solving process, Extension agents or group leaders should be sure that all group members have had a chance to express their insights into the nature of the problem before too early emphasis is given to solutions. Group members should be made aware of the importance of adequate information. An inventory should be made of all human resources and information available within the group. Care should be taken so that legitimate disagreement does not turn into personal dislike.

Extension agents should understand the nature of consensus. It is not necessarily 100 percent agreement or a 51 percent majority. It can be thought of in terms of general agreement of the entire group. Everyone agrees on a course of action as being best for the group, whether or not a person as an individual agrees with it. Agents should be aware of the consequences when consensus decisions are not reached.

The agent or leader should make a habit of testing for consensus. Just because a member does not say anything, it does not mean he has no objections. Each member should be asked separately whether or not they agree with the issue. One of the most important traits of a leader is to be able to sense when there is a lack of consensus in his group.

Extension agents should help groups identify blocks to member participation. The goals of the group should be clearly understood by all and they should meet member needs.

Group cohesiveness, or the degree to which the group remains attractive to the members, is an important concept for Extension agents.
It has been a key variable in the research of group dynamics. High relationship has been found between cohesiveness and communication effectiveness as well as overall group productivity. An understanding of the concept group cohesiveness provides Extension agents a useful tool to think about their group work. Agents should be aware of the cohesion in their groups and the lack of it. If a group appears to be losing its cohesiveness, and members are dropping out, possible causes should be sought.

Extension agents working with groups can do a great deal to create an atmosphere conducive to effective member interaction. Some of the other concepts can be applied to encourage a supportive climate of trust, free of defensiveness and anxieties. An agent should be able to determine the prevailing mood in a group at a particular time and take corrective measures if necessary.

A certain amount of homogeneity is important to a group, especially to the extent that members share interests and goals. However, group members can be too much alike. People from different backgrounds bring a wealth of variety to a group. An Extension agent should encourage a group to analyze its resources from the standpoint of things held in common and diversity of skills, values, and attitudes that can contribute to group productivity.

Group maturity is a useful concept because it indicates a goal which all groups should consciously seek to achieve. It is the stage in group development characterized by productivity, efficiency and little or no damaging conflict. Extension agents should guide all groups to reach this stage of development.
Formative or continuous evaluation should be applied by Extension agents throughout the development of a group. It is extremely important to group effectiveness and is related to all other concepts. It involves a constant monitoring of group progress. Too often the content of group discussion is overemphasized and group process is often overlooked. Extension agents should develop techniques in their group work to periodically assess both content and process variables of groups.

Summative evaluation is considered a comparison of the group's final product with the group goals. Extension agents should be aware of the importance of clear group goals to serve as standards beside which group accomplishments can be measured.

This discussion has stressed the importance of 35 group dynamics concepts. Examples of implication have been given to show how these concepts can be applied to Extension group work.
CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Variables from the three sources of the Tyler Model were analyzed to determine relationships between: 1) perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts and agent characteristics, 2) perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts and job characteristics, and 3) agent characteristics and job characteristics. The findings will be discussed under the following headings: 1) agent characteristics, 2) selected concepts, and 3) job characteristics.

Agent Characteristics

Age. The average age of professional Louisiana Extension field personnel was found to be 42.6 years. Age ranged from 23 to 64 years. The distribution of age of Louisiana Extension field personnel by major work area is shown in Table II. Most of the agricultural agents (86.0 percent), home economics agents (57.1 percent), and all of the community resource development (CRD) workers were over 40 years of age. Among the 4-H agents, 85.2 percent were under 41 years of age, while 53.7 percent were between 23 and 30 years of age.

Extension tenure. Average Extension tenure for Louisiana Extension field personnel was 14.6 years. Tenure ranged from 1 to 36 years. Table III shows the distribution in years of Extension tenure of Louisiana Extensional field personnel by major work areas. As
TABLE II

MAJOR WORK AREAS BY AGE OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Major Work Area (N=184)</th>
<th>Agriculture (N=57)</th>
<th>Home Economics (N=63)</th>
<th>4-H (N=54)</th>
<th>CRD* (N=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 - 30</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 40</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 50</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

--- Percent ---

*Community resource development

expected, this distribution was similar to that of agent age. Seventy-five percent of all agricultural workers had over 15 years of service. Twenty-six percent had worked in Extension for more than 25 years. Extension tenure for home economics agents was fairly well distributed with 49.2 percent having less than 16 years of service and 51.8 percent having 16 or more years of service. Most of the 4-H agents had less than 16 years of service (85.2 percent). Fifty-two percent had been employed by Extension five years or less. Seventy percent of the CRD agents had more than 15 years of service.
TABLE III

MAJOR WORK AREAS BY TENURE OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure (years)</th>
<th>Agriculture (N=57)</th>
<th>Home Economics (N=63)</th>
<th>4-H (N=54)</th>
<th>CRD* (N=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 15</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 25</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 25</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Community resource development

Educational background. At the Bachelor of Science level, 30 percent of the Extension agents had degrees in a field of agricultural production, and 30 percent were trained in Home Economics. Seventeen percent received undergraduate degrees in Vocational Agricultural Education, and 21 percent in Home Economics Education. The remaining two percent received B.S. degrees in Agri-Business, Economics, and Education.

Of the 64 percent of the Extension agents who had a Master's degree, 62 percent of those were in Extension Education, 18 percent in a field of agricultural production, and 11 percent in Home Economics. The remaining nine percent had M.S. degrees in Agricultural Education, Education, and Agricultural Economics.
Two agents in this study had Doctor's degrees, one in Agricultural Education and the other in a field of agricultural production.

Table IV indicates the distribution of the highest degree held by major work area among Louisiana Extension field workers. The majority of agricultural agents (86.0 percent), and home economics agents (65.1 percent) had at least a Master's degree. Less than one-half of the 4-H agents and the community resource development agents had a Master's degree.

**TABLE IV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Work Area (N=184)</th>
<th>Agriculture (N=57)</th>
<th>Home Economics (N=63)</th>
<th>4-H (N=54)</th>
<th>CRD* (N=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Community resource development

Attitudes toward group work. To be successful with groups, agents should have favorable attitudes toward group work. Table V shows that, generally, attitudes among professional Louisiana Extension field personnel were found to be favorable. It is
interesting to note that only 66.9 percent of the agents disagreed with the statement "Trying to form new groups is often more trouble than it is worth."

TABLE V
ATTITUDES TOWARD GROUP WORK AMONG LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel comfortable working with groups. (N=181)</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I actively seek participation in groups, even outside of my regular work activities. (N=181)</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Trying to form new groups is often more trouble than it is worth. (N=181)</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>66.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel that groups can accomplish a great deal. (N=181)</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel that Extension workers should try to work with groups whenever the situation seems appropriate. (N=181)</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If I had a choice, I would rather not work with groups. (N=181)</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>77.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Concepts

Awareness and use of group dynamics concepts. As discussed in Chapter III, affirmative responses to awareness and use of group dynamics concepts in the questionnaire were assumed to be only minimal levels of awareness and use of concepts. Definitions alone cannot adequately describe a concept, and the definitions used in the questionnaire were very simple.

Table VI shows the rank order of perceived awareness and use of 35 selected group dynamics concepts. Minimal awareness seemed to be high among Extension agents. Awareness of the concepts among Extension agents ranged from 72.3 to 100 percent. The five highest ranked concepts were:

1. Group size
2. Leadership
3. Power structure
4. Interpersonal compatibility
5. Empathy

The five lowest ranked concepts in terms of awareness were:

1. Goal congruity
2. Group cohesiveness
3. Conformity pressure
4. Building and maintenance roles
5. Conflict resolution

Use of selected concepts ranged from a low of 38 percent of the agents using the concept "stereotype", to a high of 92.4 percent
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Size</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Structure</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Compatibility</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>98.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliques or Subgroups</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Roles</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotype</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Training</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>96.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Atmosphere</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>95.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>95.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Conflict</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>95.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summative Evaluation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating Arrangement</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive Conflict</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Techniques</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Trust</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Clarity</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Homogeneity</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Difficulty</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Norms</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>92.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Formation</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Roles</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative Evaluation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Development</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Patterns</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Maturity</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Congruity</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Cohesiveness</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity Pressure</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Maintenance Roles</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>72.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
using the concept "group size". The five highest ranked concepts in terms of agent use were:

1. Group size
2. Leadership
3. Leader Training
4. Problem solving
5. Consensus

The five lowest ranked concepts were:
1. Conflict resolution
2. Building and maintenance roles
3. Individual roles
4. Role conflict
5. Stereotype

It is interesting to note the discrepancies between awareness and use of some concepts. This is particularly noticeable for the concepts "listening", "cliques or subgroups", "individual roles", and "stereotype", which ranked respectively 6, 8, 9, and 10 for awareness, and 20, 24, 33, and 35 for use. Perhaps this indicates inadequate understanding of implications of the concepts for group work.

**Rank order of perceived helpfulness of group dynamics concepts.**

The 35 selected concepts were ranked according to mean helpfulness score (Table VII). The scale for each concept ranged from one (little help) to seven (extremely helpful). Based on the ranking, the concepts were divided into two categories: higher perceived helpfulness and lower perceived helpfulness. Those concepts that had a mean
TABLE VII

RANK ORDER OF PERCEIVED HELPFULNESS OF SELECTED GROUP DYNAMICS CONCEPTS BY LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL AND INFERRED TRAINING PRIORITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Mean*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher Perceived Helpfulness - Lower Training Priority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Size</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Technique</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Atmosphere</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Compatibility</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Trust</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summative Evaluation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative Evaluation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Formation</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Clarity</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Structure</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Perceived Helpfulness - Higher Training Priority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Development</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Roles</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Maturity</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Homogeneity</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Norms</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating Arrangement</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive Conflict</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Congruity</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Difficulty</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Cohesiveness</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliques or Subgroups</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Maintenance Roles</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity Pressure</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Patterns</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Roles</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotype</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Conflict</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Perceived helpfulness scale ranged from 1 (little help) to 7 (extremely helpful).
perceived helpfulness ranging from 1.0 to 4.9 were placed in the second category and those with means falling between 5.0 and 7.0 were placed in the first category.

In addition to the concepts being classified according to higher and lower perceived helpfulness, as indicated above, they were also grouped in terms of higher and lower training priority. Based on the assumptions that all 35 selected concepts are important to Extension agents working with groups, and that perceived helpfulness score is some indication of the cognitive ability of agents concerning the application of these concepts, then those concepts perceived as being of lower helpfulness should receive greater emphasis in a training program. It is not intended that they be considered to the exclusion of the other concepts. Quite the contrary, both sets of concepts should be used in a training program and interrelationships demonstrated. Higher priority should be given to the concepts perceived as being of lower helpfulness, because the other concepts tend to be better understood. Concepts ranked lower tend to be more complex in nature.

The range of the mean perceived helpfulness score was from 3.38 to 6.19. The five highest ranked concepts were:

1. Leadership
2. Leadership training
3. Problem solving
4. Participation
5. Group size
The five lowest ranked concepts were:

1. Conformity pressure
2. Interaction patterns
3. Individual roles
4. Stereotype
5. Role conflict

Perceived helpfulness of group dynamics concepts by agents' major work area. Regression analysis was used to determine differences of adjusted means of perceived helpfulness score by major work areas of professional Louisiana Extension field personnel (Table VIII). Statistically significant differences were found in 16 of the 35 group dynamics concepts.

Where statistically significant differences existed, agricultural agents rated 7 of the 16 concepts lower than agents in other work areas. These concepts were:

1. Seating arrangement
2. Interaction patterns
3. Interpersonal compatibility
4. Leadership training
5. Summative evaluation
6. Productive conflict
7. Listening

The concepts "seating arrangement", "interaction patterns", "productive conflict", and "listening" fell in the higher training priority category of concepts (Table VII).
TABLE VIII
PERCEIVED HELPFULNESS OF GROUP DYNAMICS CONCEPTS BY MAJOR WORK AREAS OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
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<td>Home Ec. (N=63)</td>
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*Community resource development
TABLE VIII (CONTINUED)

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<th>CRD* (N=10)</th>
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- - - Adjusted Means - - -

There were no concepts that agents in agricultural adult work rated higher than other agent categories.

Community resource development agents ranked 9 of the 16 concepts lower than other agents. They included the following:

1. Stereotype       \[ P < .01 \]
2. Individual roles \[ P < .15 \]
3. Role conflict    \[ P < .08 \]
4. Group norms      \[ P < .008 \]
5. Conformity pressure \[ P < .03 \]
6. Participation    \[ P < .07 \]
7. Group cohesiveness \( P < .05 \)
8. Group atmosphere \( P < .12 \)
9. Group formation \( P < .22 \)

All of the concepts above, except "participation" and "group atmosphere", were considered higher training priority concepts (Table VII).

Although the CRD agents rated the greatest number of concepts lower than any other group, they rated two concepts higher than any other group: "leadership training" \( P < .002 \) and "summative evaluation" \( P < .11 \).

Home economics and 4-H agents rated the 16 concepts showing statistically significant rating differences higher than agricultural and CRD agents.

Perceived helpfulness of group dynamics concepts by percent teaching time devoted to group work. Correlation analysis was used to determine if relationships existed between perceived helpfulness score of selected group dynamics concepts and percent teaching time devoted to group work (Table IX).

All significant relationships were found to be positive, indicating that agents who spend more teaching time in group work tended to rate certain concepts higher than agents who work less with groups. Perceived helpfulness of 23 of the 35 selected concepts were found to be significantly related to percent teaching time devoted to group work.
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<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Probability</th>
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<td>Cliques or Subgroup</td>
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<td>Empathy</td>
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<td>Task Roles</td>
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Table IX (Continued)

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</table>

Four of the group dynamics concepts had correlation coefficients greater than .20. They were statistically significant in order of highest \((r = .35)\) to lowest \((r = .20)\) relationships as follows:

1. Seating arrangement \(P < .0001\)
2. Summative evaluation \(P < .0002\)
3. Cliques or subgroups \(P < .004\)
4. Leadership training \(P < .006\)

Two of these "seating arrangement" and "cliques or subgroups" were considered in the higher training priority category.

Seven of the concepts were found to have correlation coefficients ranging from .15 to .19. These included:

1. Group norms \(P < .02\)
2. Listening \(P < .02\)
3. Interpersonal compatibility \(P < .02\)
4. Interpersonal trust  \( P < .03 \)
5. Group formation  \( P < .03 \)
6. Productive conflict  \( P < .03 \)
7. Participation  \( P < .04 \)

Of the above, "group norms", "listening", and "productive conflict" were considered higher training priority concepts.

The other 12 concepts showed significance, but low correlation with percent teaching time devoted to group work, ranging from .10 to .14.

Perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts by agent age and Extension tenure. Correlation analysis was also made to determine if significant relationships existed between perceived helpfulness of concepts and agent age and Extension tenure (Table X). For both age and tenure, all significant relationships were negatively related, indicating that younger Extension agents with fewer years of service tended to rate the concepts higher than older agents with more years of experience.

Relationships of agent age and Extension tenure were found to be similar when compared with perceived helpfulness of concepts. Statistically significant relationships existed between these two variables and the following concepts:

1. Role conflict
2. Stereotype
3. Leadership
4. Group norms
5. Individual roles
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>&lt; .16</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>&lt; .23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Technique</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Formation</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>&lt; .17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Development</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Listening
7. Productive conflict
8. Goal difficulty
9. Consensus
10. Participation

There were some additional concepts where perceived helpfulness was found to be statistically significantly related to agent age or Extension tenure, but not both. These relationships included perceived helpfulness of "group maturity", "problem solving", and "interpersonal trust" for the analysis of agent age, and "group formation" and "seating arrangement" for the analysis of Extension tenure.

Of the above mentioned 15 concepts, only "leadership", "consensus", "participation", "problem solving", "seating arrangement" and "interpersonal trust" were not considered higher training priority concepts.

**Job Characteristics**

The primary focus of this section is on problems related to group work expressed by professional Louisiana Extension field personnel.
Agents were asked to indicate on a questionnaire the degree to which seven broad areas were problems to them in their group work. A comparison was also made between teaching time devoted to group work and the major work areas of the Extension agents.

**Leadership development as a problem.** Leadership development appears to be a widespread concern. Only 20 percent of all Extension agents felt that it was no problem to them in their group work. No statistically significant differences were found when the extent to which leadership development was a problem was compared with major work area categories of Extension agents (Table XI).

**TABLE XI**

**MAJOR WORK AREAS BY THE DEGREE THAT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM AMONG LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Agriculture (N=56)</th>
<th>Home Economics (N=63)</th>
<th>4-H (N=53)</th>
<th>CRD* (N=9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 3.48 \text{ with } 6 \text{ d.f.} \]

N.S.

*Community resource development*
Table XII shows that there were significant differences found when the adjusted means of the variables age and percent teaching time devoted to group work were compared with the extent that leadership development was a problem. It appeared that younger agents found leadership development to be more of a problem than older agents. Leadership development was also found to be a greater problem among those agents who spent more time working with groups than those who spent less teaching time working with groups.

**TABLE XII**

**AGE, TENURE, AND PERCENT TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO GROUP WORK OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL BY THE DEGREE THAT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Percent (N=181)</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Tenure (Years)</th>
<th>Group Work (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable Problem</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Problem</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

--- Adjusted Means ---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>ns</th>
<th>&lt; .20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>&lt; .13</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>&lt; .20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group productivity as a problem. Significant differences were found between the extent that group productivity was expressed as a problem and major work area categories of Extension agents (Table XIII).
TABLE XIII

MAJOR WORK AREAS BY THE DEGREE THAT GROUP PRODUCTIVITY WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM AMONG LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Agriculture (N=56)</th>
<th>Home Economics (N=63)</th>
<th>4-H (N=53)</th>
<th>CRD* (N=9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great Problem</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ X^2 = 9.89 \text{ with } 6 \text{ d.f.} \quad P < .13 \]

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It appeared that agents working with adults in agriculture and 4-H agents found that group productivity was a greater problem than home economics agents and to some extent CRD agents. Twenty-five percent of the agricultural agents and 35.8 percent of the 4-H agents felt that group productivity was a considerable or great problem in their group work, while only 17.5 percent of the home economics agents and 11.1 percent of the CRD agents felt that group productivity was a considerable or great problem.

Adjusted means were only found to be significantly different for the variable Extension tenure (Table XIV). Generally, those agents with less tenure considered group productivity to be a greater problem than agents with more experience.
TABLE XIV

AGE, TENURE, AND PERCENT TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO GROUP
WORK OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL BY
THE DEGREE THAT GROUP PRODUCTIVITY WAS
PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Percent (N=181)</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Extension Tenure (Years)</th>
<th>Teaching Time Group Work (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great Problem</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

--- Adjusted Means ---

| F     | 1     | 2.01 | 1 |
| P     | ns    | <.14 | ns |

Quarreling among group members as a problem. It appeared that quarreling among members was not considered a serious problem in Extension group work. Ninety-five percent of all Extension agents expressed that this was no problem or only a slight problem. There were no statistically significant differences between the extent that quarreling among members was a problem and major work area of Extension agents (Table XV).

Statistically significant differences did appear when adjusted means of age and percent teaching time devoted to group work were compared with the extent that quarreling among members was considered a problem (Table XVI). Younger agents appeared to have more problems
TABLE XV

MAJOR WORK AREAS BY THE DEGREE THAT QUARRELING AMONG GROUP MEMBERS WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM AMONG LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Major Work Area (N=181)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture (N=56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great Problem</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ X^2 = 4.63 \text{ with 6 d.f.} \quad \text{N.S.} \]

*Community resource development

with quarreling among members in their groups than older agents. There were also indications that agents who spent more time working with groups had more problems with quarreling among members than did agents who spent less time working with groups.
TABLE XVI

AGE, TENURE, AND PERCENT TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO GROUP WORK OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL BY THE DEGREE THAT QUARRELING AMONG GROUP MEMBERS WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Percent (N=181)</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Extension Tenure (Years)</th>
<th>Teaching Time Group Work (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great Problem</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| F                          | 1.53            | 1           | 1.93                     |
| P                          | < .21           | ns          | < .15                    |

Excessive dependence on an agent as a leader as a problem.

Excessive dependence on an agent as a leader seemed to be an important problem for Extension agents. Thirty-six percent of all agents felt that it was a considerable to a great problem in their work. No statistically significant differences were found when compared with major work areas (Table XVII).

No statistically significant differences were found among the adjusted means of the variables agent age, Extension tenure, and percent teaching time devoted to group work and the incidence of this problem (Table XVIII).
TABLE XVII

MAJOR WORK AREAS BY THE DEGREE THAT EXCESSIVE DEPENDENCE ON THE AGENT AS A LEADER OF A GROUP WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM AMONG LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Major Work Area (N=181)</th>
<th>Agriculture (N=56)</th>
<th>Home Economics (N=63)</th>
<th>4-H (N=53)</th>
<th>CRD* (N=9)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td></td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Slight Problem</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 6.16$ with 6 d.f. ns

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TABLE XVIII

AGE, TENURE, AND PERCENT TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO GROUP WORK OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL BY THE DEGREE THAT EXCESSIVE DEPENDENCE ON THE AGENT AS A LEADER WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Percent (N=181)</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Tenure (Years)</th>
<th>Extension Group Work</th>
<th>Teaching Time Group Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable Problem</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Problem</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$F < 1 \quad P_{ns}$

$P < 1 \quad P_{ns}$

$P < 1 \quad P_{ns}$

$P < 1 \quad P_{ns}$

$P < 1 \quad P_{ns}$

$P < 1 \quad P_{ns}$
New group formation as a problem. Thirty-five percent of all agents felt that new group formation was a considerable to great problem. When compared with agent major work area categories, statistically significant differences were found in the degree to which forming new groups was perceived as a problem (Table XIX). Home economics agents and agricultural agents seemed to express greater concern with forming new groups, than 4-H or CRD agents.

**TABLE XIX**

MAJOR WORK AREA BY THE DEGREE THAT FORMING NEW GROUPS WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM AMONG LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Work Area (N=181)</th>
<th>Agriculture (N=56)</th>
<th>Home Economics (N=63)</th>
<th>4-H (N=53)</th>
<th>CRD* (N=9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree of Problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great Problem</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ X^2 = 9.60 \text{ with } 6 \text{ d.f.} \quad P < .14 \]

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When adjusted means of age, tenure, and percent teaching time devoted to group work were compared with the extent that group formation was a problem, a significant difference in means was only
found for teaching time devoted to group work (Table XX). While there was no definite pattern, it appeared that agents who spent much less time in group work considered group formation a greater problem than those agents who spent greater amounts of teaching time working with groups.

TABLE XX

AGE, TENURE, AND PERCENT TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO GROUP WORK
OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL BY THE DEGREE
THAT FORMING NEW GROUPS WAS PERCEIVED AS A
PROBLEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Percent (N=181)</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Extension Tenure (Years)</th>
<th>Teaching Time Group Work (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable Problem</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Problem</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

--- Adjusted Means ---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1.49</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>&lt;.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Maintaining participation as a problem.** Maintaining participation appeared to be a problem in Extension group work. Only 18 percent of all agents indicated that it was no problem.
Statistically significant differences were found in major work areas when compared to the extent that maintaining participation was felt to be a problem (Table XXI). Over one-half of the agricultural (51.8 percent) and CRD (55.6 percent) agents felt that maintaining participation was a considerable to great problem, while 32.1 percent of the 4-H agents and 27 percent of the home economics agents felt it to be a considerable or great problem.

**TABLE XXI**

**MAJOR WORK AREA BY THE DEGREE THAT MAINTAINING PARTICIPATION WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM AMONG LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Major Work Area (N=181)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture (N=56)</td>
<td>Home Economics (N=63)</td>
<td>4-H (N=53)</td>
<td>CRD* (N=9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great Problem</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 12.51 \text{ with 6 d.f.} \]
\[ P < .05 \]

*Community resource development

Table XXII shows that there were significant differences when the extent that maintaining participation was a problem and the adjusted means of agent age, Extension tenure, and percent teaching time devoted to group work. It appeared that older agents with more
years experience had greater problems with group participation than younger agents with fewer years tenure. There also seemed to be indications that agents who spent more teaching time in group work had fewer problems with maintaining participation than agents who spent less time.

### TABLE XXII

**AGE, TENURE, AND PERCENT TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO GROUP WORK OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL BY THE DEGREE THAT MAINTAINING PARTICIPATION WAS PERCEIVED AS A PROBLEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem</th>
<th>Percent (N=181)</th>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Extension Tenure (Years)</th>
<th>Teaching Time Group Work (Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Problem</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight Problem</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>50.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable or Great Problem</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>1.47</th>
<th>1.86</th>
<th>3.37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>&lt; .23</td>
<td>&lt; .16</td>
<td>&lt; .04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent teaching time devoted to group work. Table XXIII shows the distribution of the percent teaching time devoted to group work during an 11-month period by the major work areas of Louisiana Extension field personnel. It appeared that agricultural agents and
CRD agents spent less teaching time working with groups than the other agents. Eighty-eight percent of the agricultural agents and 80.0 percent of the CRD agents spent less than 50 percent of their teaching time working with groups, while 75.9 percent of the 4-H agents and 66.7 percent of the home economics agents spent 50 percent or more of their teaching time in group work.

**TABLE XXIII**

**MAJOR WORK AREAS OF LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL BY PERCENT TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO GROUP WORK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Teaching Time (Percent)</th>
<th>Major Work Area (N=184)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture (N=57)</td>
<td>Home Economics (N=63)</td>
<td>4-H (N=54)</td>
<td>CRD* (N=10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 75</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Community resource development*
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

Group work has been and will continue to be an extremely important method of working with Extension audiences. According to data from the Louisiana Extension Management Information System (LEMIS), 45 percent of the teaching time of Louisiana Extension personnel over the past few years has been devoted to group work. There are indications that groups will increase in importance as community resource development programs expand and attempts are made to reach more people.

Several sources have indicated the need for more training in the social sciences for Extension agents, especially in the field of group dynamics (145, 103, 143, 97). There is a wealth of knowledge that has come of the multi-disciplinary research in the area of group dynamics. With increased emphasis on community resource development and the need to reach more people, group action is becoming more and more important. Extension agents should have an understanding of and use relevant group dynamics concepts in their group work to ensure maximum efficiency and productivity.

Objectives of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to determine training needs in the area of group dynamics among professional Louisiana Extension
field personnel. The specific objectives were:

1. Identify key group dynamics concepts that agents should apply to their group work to increase efficiency and productivity.

2. Determine the relationships between perceived helpfulness of key group dynamics concepts and selected agent characteristics.

3. Determine the relationship between perceived helpfulness of key group dynamics concepts and selected job characteristics related to agent group work.

4. Determine the relationship between selected agent characteristics and job characteristics.

Methodology

The theoretical basis of this study came from the curriculum development model of Tyler (84). Based on the Tyler rationale, a combination of three sources of information were used to determine training needs: 1) the learners themselves (agent characteristics), 2) the contemporary life (job characteristics), and 3) the subject specialists (selected concepts).

After an intensive review of literature, Extension-oriented philosophical and job-related and learning psychology screens were used to select group dynamics concepts that have important implications for Extension group work.

The population of this study included all professional Louisiana Extension field personnel with at least one year of work experience
as of May 1, 1974. The study sample comprised 184 individuals who returned the questionnaires.

Three principal methods were used to collect information for this study: 1) library research, 2) mail questionnaire, 3) computer retrieval. An intensive review of literature was made to select key concepts in the field of group dynamics. The mail questionnaire was used to obtain information related to the perceived awareness, use, and helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts and selected agent and group characteristics. Information regarding teaching time spent in group work was retrieved from the Louisiana Extension Management Information System (LEMIS) computer data.

Data was analyzed based on relationships among the three sources of information suggested by the Tyler Model: 1) agent characteristics, 2) selected group concepts, and 3) job characteristics. The primary focus was on perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts, as they related to agent characteristics and job characteristics.

Major Findings

Selected concepts. Based on the philosophical and psychological screening processes used in the study, 35 group dynamics concepts were selected as having important implications for Extension group work. These concepts were scored by agents in terms of how helpful the concepts were in their work. On the basis of literature review and the major degree of selectivity exercised in screening Extension job-related concepts, the author assumed that perceived helpfulness scores could be taken to be a reliable indicator of the cognitive ability of agents in the area of group dynamics. It was therefore inferred that
concepts which were perceived to be not very helpful in the agent's job were in fact those concepts in which the agent did not have strong understanding, and, consequently, needed additional training. By the same token, concepts perceived to be more to very helpful in the agent's job were rather well-understood and, therefore, could be accorded a lower training priority. Based on this inference, the 35 concepts were classified in two categories (a) Higher perceived helpfulness concepts to be accorded lower training priority, and (b) Lower perceived helpfulness concepts to be accorded higher training priority. Concepts falling in these categories are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher perceived helpfulness, lower training priority concepts</th>
<th>Lower perceived helpfulness, higher training priority concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leadership</td>
<td>1. Group development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leadership training</td>
<td>2. Task roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Problem solving</td>
<td>3. Group maturity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Participation</td>
<td>4. Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Group size</td>
<td>5. Group homogeneity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Group technique</td>
<td>7. Seating arrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Group atmosphere</td>
<td>8. Productive conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Interpersonal compatibility</td>
<td>10. Goal difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Interpersonal trust</td>
<td>11. Group cohesiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Summative evaluation</td>
<td>12. Cliques or subgroup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Formative evaluation</td>
<td>13. Conflict resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Goal clarity</td>
<td>15. Conformity pressure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of agricultural agents. These agents tended to be older than all other agents. Eighty-seven percent were over 41 years old, while 47 percent were over 50 years of age.

They also tended to have the most tenure in the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. Seventy-five percent had worked over 15 years, and 26.3 percent had been employed for more than 25 years.

Where statistically significant differences existed when comparisons were made between mean perceived helpfulness of group dynamics concepts and major work areas, agricultural agents ranked seven concepts lower than any other category of agents. They were:

1. Seating arrangement
2. Interaction patterns
3. Interpersonal compatibility
4. Leadership training
5. Summative evaluation
6. Productive conflict
7. Listening

"Seating arrangement," "interaction patterns," "productive conflict," and "listening" were considered higher training priority concepts.

In terms of problem areas in group work, where statistically significant differences existed, agricultural agents perceived group
productivity as being a greater problem than home economics and community resource development agents and maintaining participation as being of greater concern than home economics agents and 4-H agents.

Although not statistically different from other agent categories, agricultural agents also expressed concern with other problems. Leadership development was considered to be a considerable to great problem by 30.4 percent of the agents. Thirty-eight percent perceived excessive dependence on them as leaders as a considerable to great problem and 33.8 percent felt that forming new groups was a considerable to great problem.

Agricultural agents tended to spend less teaching time working with groups than other agents. Eighty-eight percent spent less than 50 percent of their teaching time in group work.

Characteristics of home economics agents. Age for home economics agents was fairly well distributed over the range from 23 to 64 years. A little over one-half (57.1 percent) of these agents were over 40 years of age. Sixteen percent were between the ages of 23 and 30, while only 1.8 percent of the agricultural workers were found in that age group.

Extension tenure for home economics agents was also fairly well spread out over the range, from 1 to 36 years. Forty-nine percent had served less than 16 years and 51.8 percent had 16 or more years of service.

Where statistically significant differences existed between mean perceived helpfulness score and major work areas, home economics agents
rated six concepts higher than the other agent work categories. They did not rank any of the concepts lower than other agents, where statistically significant differences did occur.

When major work areas were compared with the degree that certain problems existed in group work, home economics agents, where statistically significant differences existed, felt that new group formation was more of a problem to them in their group work, than did other agents. Forty-eight percent felt that forming new groups was a considerable to great problem.

Leadership development also appears to be a concern among home economics agents. Only 15.9 percent indicated that it was not a problem, while 36.5 percent felt it to be a considerable to great problem. Thirty-one percent felt that excessive dependence on them as leaders was a considerable to great problem to them in their group work. Group productivity and maintaining participation appeared to be only moderate problems, while quarreling among group members appeared to be only a slight problem.

Home agents spent a good deal of their teaching time working with groups. Sixty-seven percent spent 50 percent or more of their teaching time in group work. Almost 16 percent spent over 75 percent of their teaching time with groups, while only 1.8 percent of agricultural agents spent that much time with groups.
Characteristics of 4-H agents. 4-H Agents tended to be younger than any of the other agents. Eighty-five percent were under 41 years of age, while 53.7 percent were between the ages of 23 and 30.

As expected, 4-H agents also had the lowest Extension tenure. Eighty-five percent had less than 16 years of service, and a little over one-half (51.9 percent) had less than five years of work experience in the Extension Service.

When comparisons were made between major work areas and the mean perceived helpfulness score, 4-H agents rated 8 of the 16 concepts, where statistically significant difference existed, higher than other agents and none lower than other agents.

Where statistically significant differences were found in comparison of the degree that certain problems existed in group work with major work areas, a higher proportion of 4-H agents indicated that group productivity was a considerable to great problem than other agents. Only 7.6 percent felt that group productivity was not a problem, and 35.8 percent stated that it was a considerable to great problem to them in their group work.

Although not statistically different from other agent work categories, leadership development appeared to be a problem. Thirty-nine percent felt that it was a considerable to great problem in their group work. Excessive dependence on 4-H agents as leaders was expressed as a major problem. Only 9.4 percent felt that it was no problem, while 43.4 percent felt it to be a considerable to great problem.
Forming new groups appeared to be substantially less of a problem for 4-H agents than for agricultural and home economics agents. Seventy-four percent perceived it to be no problem or only a slight problem.

Although statistically significant differences existed, and 4-H agents perceived maintaining participation to be less of a problem than agricultural and community resource development agents, they still expressed concern. Only 13.2 percent felt that maintaining participation was not a problem, while 32.1 percent indicated that it was a considerable to great problem to them in their group work.

4-H agents spent more teaching time working with groups than all other agents. None spent less than 25 percent of their teaching time working with groups, while 38.6 percent of the agricultural agents spent less than 25 percent teaching time with groups. Seventy-six percent spent over 50 percent of their teaching time in group work.

Characteristics of community resource development agents. All of the community resource development agents in the study sample were over 40 years of age. Seventy percent had more than 15 years service in the Louisiana Extension Service.

Where statistically significant differences existed when adjusted mean perceived helpfulness score was compared with major work areas, community resource development agents ranked 9 of the 16 concepts lower than all other agents. These concepts were:

1. Stereotype
2. Individual roles
3. Role conflict
4. Group norms
5. Conformity pressure
6. Participation
7. Group cohesiveness
8. Group atmosphere

Of the above nine concepts only "participation," "group atmosphere," and "group formation" were not considered higher training priority concepts.

Maintaining participation in groups seemed to be a major problem among community resource development agents. Over one-half (55.6 percent) felt that it was a considerable to great problem.

Leadership development was not perceived as being a very important problem among most community resource development agents. Seventy-eight percent felt that it was no problem or only a slight problem. Eighty-nine percent of these agents indicated that group productivity and new group formation were not problems or only slight problems.

Community resource development workers did feel that excessive dependence on them as a leader was a problem. Forty-five percent indicated that this was a considerable to great problem.

Surprisingly, according to the data, community resource development agents spent less teaching time working with groups than other agents. Eighty percent spent less than 50 percent of their teaching time in group work.
Relationships with agent age.

Major work area: It was found that agricultural agents and community resource development agents tended to be older than the other agents. Eighty-six percent of the agricultural agents and 100 percent of the community resource development agents were over 40 years old. Age of home economics agents was fairly well distributed over the range, while 85.2 percent of the 4-H agents were under 41 years of age. Fifty-four percent of the 4-H agents were between 23 and 30 years of age.

Perceived helpfulness of concepts: When age of Louisiana Extension field personnel was compared with ratings of perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts, 13 statistically significant relationships were found. All 13 were found to be negatively related, indicating that older agents rated the concepts lower than younger agents.

Problems in group work: When the adjusted means of agents' age were compared with the extent that various problems were perceived as important, the following significant differences were found:

1. Younger agents felt that leadership development was more of a problem than older agents ($P < .13$).
2. Younger agents felt that quarreling among group members was more of a problem than older agents ($P < .21$).
3. Older agents felt that maintaining participation in groups was more of a problem than younger agents ($P < .23$).
Relationships with Extension tenure.

Major work area: Tenure distribution was found to be very similar to age distribution according to major work area categories. Agricultural agents tended to have the greatest number of years of Extension tenure. Seventy-five percent had over 15 years of service and 26.3 percent had more than 25 years tenure. Seventy percent of the community resource development agents had over 15 years of service. Tenure among home economics agents was spread out over the range from 1 to 36 years, 49.2 percent having less than 16 years of service and 51.8 percent having 16 or more years work experience. Eighty-five percent of the 4-H agents had less than 16 years experience, and 51.9 percent had been employed less than five years.

Perceived helpfulness of concepts: When Extension tenure of professional Louisiana Extension field personnel was compared with ratings of perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts, 12 relationships were found to be statistically significant. The perceived helpfulness scores of these 12 concepts were found to be negatively related to Extension tenure, indicating that agents who had been employed longer by the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service tended to rate concepts lower in perceived helpfulness than agents with fewer years service.

Problems in group work: When adjusted means of Extension tenure were compared with the extent that various problems were perceived as being important by Louisiana Extension field personnel, the following
statistically significant differences were found:

1. Agents with fewer years of service felt that group productivity was more of a problem than agents with more experience (P < .14).

2. Agents with more years of experience in Extension felt that maintaining participation was more of a problem than agents with fewer years of service (P < .16).

Percent Teaching Time Devoted to Group Work.

Major work area: It appeared that 4-H agents and home economics agents spent the highest proportions of teaching time in group work compared with agriculture and CRD agents. Seventy-six percent of the 4-H agents and 66.7 percent of the home economics agents spent over 50 percent of their teaching time working with groups. Eighty-eight percent of the agricultural agents and 80 percent of the community resource development agents spent 50 percent or less of their teaching time in group work.

Perceived helpfulness of concepts: When percent teaching time devoted to group work was compared with perceived helpfulness of selected group dynamics concepts, 23 of the 35 relationships were found to be statistically significant. All of these statistically significant relationships were positive, indicating that agents who spent a larger proportion of their teaching time in group work tended to rate the concepts higher than agents spending less teaching time working with groups.
Problems in group work: When the adjusted means of percent teaching time devoted to group work was compared with the extent that various problems were perceived as important by Louisiana Extension agents, the following statistically significant differences were found:

1. Agents who spent more teaching time with groups perceived leadership development to be a greater problem than agents who spent less time in group work ($P < .20$).

2. Agents who spent more teaching time in group work found quarreling among members to be more of a problem than agents spending less teaching time with groups ($P < .15$).

3. Agents who spent less teaching time in group work found maintaining participation to be a greater problem than those working more with groups ($P < .04$).

Attitudes Toward Group Work. Generally, attitudes toward group work were found to be favorable among professional Louisiana Extension field personnel.

CONCLUSIONS

Training needs in group dynamics among professional Louisiana Extension field personnel which have been identified in this study can be used to develop a suitable in-service training curriculum.

It is felt that the highly selective and discriminating list of 35 concepts used in the study can form a set of core training concepts for all Extension agents. The study showed that, in general, Extension
agents had a favorable attitude toward working with clientele in group learning situations. This would make the task of the in-service trainer in obtaining learner receptivity to a group dynamics training program somewhat less difficult than if an unfavorable attitude existed.

While developing such an in-service training program, findings of this study which could influence the format and content of training may be considered in terms of 1) relative training priority of concepts, 2) observed interrelationships between selected group dynamics concepts and 3) major work areas of Extension personnel. Other relationships observed in the study which may have a bearing on these two areas of consideration can be appropriately interjected.

Training Priority of Concepts

The reaction of Extension agents in terms of perceived job helpfulness of group dynamics concepts allowed categorization of the concepts on the basis of higher or lower training priority. Relating perceived job helpfulness to cognitive ability, the author considered 19 concepts as being higher in training priority, the remaining 16 concepts being placed in the category of lower training priority. This classification needs to be given some thought in selecting concepts for in-service training.

Four major problem areas in group work were indicated by more than one-third of all agents. These were related to 1) maintaining member participation, 2) forming new groups, 3) leadership development, and 4) excessive dependence on agent as a leader. It would appear that
dependence by Extension audiences on agents for leadership in groups may be an indication of inadequate leader ability among people. These four problem areas could be covered in the concepts labelled "Participation", "Group Formation" and "Leadership Training." These concepts, according to the training priority classification, were accorded lower priority. However, in view of the importance agents attached to these problem areas, it would appear appropriate to give them a higher priority.

**Training Adjustments by Major Work Areas**

When training can be provided to certain segments of the Extension agent population according to major work area, then special emphasis can be given to certain concepts.

**Agricultural agents.** Emphasis should be given in training of agricultural agents to those seven concepts that they rated lower than other agents. Four of these seven concepts were considered to be higher training priority.

Agricultural agents also felt more keenly than other agents about problems in forming new groups, maintaining member participation, and increasing group productivity. Older agents, agents with more tenure, and agents who spent less time in group teaching experienced similar problems in forming new groups and maintaining member participation. The fact that agricultural agents were older had more tenure and spent less teaching time with groups would tend to strengthen the need for these problem areas to be given consideration in training of agricultural agents.
**Home economics agents.** When selecting concepts for training home economics agents, it should be considered that they perceive new group formation as a greater problem than other agents.

Based on the analysis of percent teaching time devoted to group work with problem areas, it can be concluded that since home economics agents spend a great deal of their time in group work, they tend to consider leadership development and quarreling among members as more of a problem than agents who spend less time working with groups.

**4-H agents.** For 4-H agents, group productivity seemed to be a special problem. Emphasis should be given to this area when training concepts are selected.

4-H agents tended to be the youngest, had least years of Extension experience, and spent most teaching time in group work, as compared with other agents. More younger agents tended to perceive leadership development and quarreling among members as greater problems than older agents, with more experience, who spent less teaching time in group work. These younger agents likely were in 4-H work. Consequently, training for 4-H agents should include these problem areas as well.

**Community resource development agents.** A training program in group dynamics for CRD agents should emphasize the nine concepts that they ranked lower than other agents. Six of these were considered higher training priority concepts.

More CRD agents expressed that maintaining participation in their groups was a considerable to great problem than other agents. This
should be taken into account when concepts are selected for a training program for them.

Like the agricultural agents, CRD agents tended to be older, with more Extension tenure and spent less teaching time in group work. Consequently, they experienced similar problems in forming new groups and maintaining member participation as did the agricultural agents.

Although it has been pointed out that certain group dynamics concepts should receive special emphasis in a training program, they should not be treated as isolated units. All concepts are related by differing degrees. These interrelationships should be identified and demonstrated when possible.

An understanding of and ability to use the group dynamics concepts discussed in this study should enable professional Louisiana Extension field personnel to become more effective in their group work.
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C. PERIODICALS


D. UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL


APPENDIX 1

INITIAL LIST OF GROUP DYNAMICS CONCEPTS

1. Teamwork
2. Consensus
3. Group member roles
4. Helping relationship
5. Group norms
6. Interpersonal communications
7. Participation
8. Group atmosphere
9. Group cohesiveness
10. Control
11. Group structure
12. Group goals
13. Group evaluation
14. Homogeneity
15. Conflict resolution
16. Interpersonal conflict
17. Group type
18. Position power
19. Leader-member relations
20. Task structure
21. Empathy
22. Commitment
23. Group effectiveness
24. Social distance
25. Leadership style
26. Group tasks
27. Sociometric traits
28. Group size
29. Conformity behavior
30. Syntality traits
31. Cliques or subgroups
32. Synergy
33. Leadership behavior
34. Group development
35. Group formation
36. Group interaction
37. Territoriality
38. Seating arrangement
39. Interpersonal distance
40. Interpersonal orientation
41. Authoritarianism
42. Approach-avoidance tendencies
43. Social sensitivity
44. Social power
45. Defensive communication
46. Personality traits
47. Task roles
48. Maintenance roles
49. Win-lose situation
50. Summative evaluation
51. Formative evaluation
52. Maintenance stop
53. Participant observer
54. Feedback
55. Dysfunctional roles
56. Volunteerism
57. Supportive climate
58. Defensive climate
59. Leader identification
60. Intragroup conflict
61. Listening
62. Leadership functions
63. Human needs
64. Group technique
65. Motivation
66. Stereotype
67. Leadership rejection
68. Personal growth
69. Emergent leadership
70. Leader orientation
71. Interpersonal perception
72. Shared leadership
73. Social group
74. Leadership types
75. Group standards
76. Conformity pressure
77. Patterns of interaction
78. Social facilitation
79. Interpersonal influence
80. Role differentiation
81. Channels of communication
82. Group learning
83. Cooperation
84. Competition
85. Problem solving
86. Group judgment
87. Group productivity
88. Affiliation motivation
89. Polarization
90. Group tension
91. Group integration
92. Group morale
93. Member status
94. Group emotion
APPENDIX 2

MAIL QUESTIONNAIRE

TRAINING NEEDS OF PROFESSIONAL LOUISIANA EXTENSION FIELD PERSONNEL IN GROUP DYNAMICS

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine to what extent professional Extension workers in Louisiana are aware of and use certain concepts of group dynamics in their group work and how this relates to other factors.

Definitions:

Group Dynamics: An applied and theoretical field of social science that has as its major aim a better understanding of how people interact in face-to-face situations in a small group setting. It has as a practical goal the use of theories to help groups function more efficiently and productively.

Extension Groups: For the purpose of this study, the Extension group is defined as any group you work with, in your capacity as an Extension employee, and are directly responsible for its functioning. A group is usually defined as two or more people interacting over time on a face-to-face basis sharing common goals.

General Instructions:

1. Please read all parts of the questionnaire and answer all questions completely. It should take only 20 minutes to complete.

2. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. It is extremely important to the validity of this study that you give your frank opinions.

3. All information will be kept confidential. The data will be analyzed on a group basis.
SECTION I - GROUP DYNAMICS CONCEPTS

The first section of this questionnaire consists of a list of concepts and three possible responses to each. Job activities vary greatly among Extension workers, as well as the need to know and use certain concepts. For example, to some agents the need to know and use the concept of leadership development may be a vital part of their daily activities, while others, due to the nature of their job, would not be expected to know and use the concept. The purpose of this section is to determine which group dynamics concepts agents are aware of and use and how helpful they perceive the concept to their effectiveness in group work.

Instructions: Read carefully each concept and think of the Extension groups you work with. If you are aware of the concept, make a check in the space provided under the "AWARENESS" column. If you also use the concept in your group work, check under the "USE" column. In the third column, based on the brief description and/or your knowledge of the concept, circle the number that best describes how helpful you think the concept is or could be to your effectiveness in your Extension group work.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>AWARENESS</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>HELPFULNESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The feeling, mood or tone that permeates the group (Group Atmosphere).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If I am aware of this concept, however have not used it and think it to be of only slight help, I would complete as follows:

✓       7 6 5 4 3 2 1

If I were aware of the concept, use it in my group work, and think it to be very helpful, I would complete as follows:

✓ ✓     7 6 5 4 3 2 1

If not aware of the concept, and therefore had not used it, but think it might be of some help, I would respond only under the "HELPFULNESS" column as follows:

    7 6 5 4 3 2 1
### Group Structure Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT*</th>
<th>AWARENESS USE</th>
<th>HELPFULNESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Patterns of power among individuals eventually emerge in almost all social groups (Power Structure).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The size of the group has been found to affect both quality and quantity of member interaction (Group Size).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Patterns of seating in a group have been found to influence interaction among members (Seating Arrangement).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Groups develop patterns of one-way and two-way communication among members (Interaction Patterns).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Because of differences in social status and prestige, there are degrees of psychological distance among individuals in a group (Social Distance).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The word or words in parenthesis following the idea are commonly used labels of the concept. It is not important for this study that you have ever heard of or used the label for the concept; what is important is that you have been aware of and used the idea to improve group productivity in your Extension work.*
### Group Process Concepts

**Interpersonal Relations:** The process of working and getting along with other people.

1. **Individuals in a group** have different personalities, which determine how they get along with others (Interpersonal Compatibility).  
   - HELPFULNESS: 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

2. **We often tend to place people in rigid categories according to our first impressions (Stereotype).**  
   - HELPFULNESS: 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

3. **Effective group interaction** has been found to increase when members readily give acceptance and a sense of genuineness to others (Interpersonal Trust).  
   - HELPFULNESS: 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

4. **Individual relationships in a group improve** when members try to see an issue from the others' point of view; when they can put themselves in the "shoes" of the other person (Empathy).  
   - HELPFULNESS: 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
5. The degree to which members trust, like and are willing to follow the guidance of their leader influences group productivity (Leader-Member Relations).

6. There are considerations that are important to establishing an effective relationship to help others (Helping Relationship).

Member Roles: Patterns of behavior develop in groups which characterize an individual's place in the group. These roles must be played to promote effective group growth and productivity.

1. There are certain roles in a group that are directly related to accomplishing group goals, whether it be the solution of a problem or the completion of a project (Task Roles).

2. Some roles encourage members to build group-centered attitudes and orientations and to maintain these among the members (Building and Maintenance Roles).
3. Some individuals play selfish roles that serve to satisfy only their personal needs, without regard for the needs of the group (Individual Roles).

4. Resentment may sometimes arise among group members because of differences in expectations of certain roles. For example, conflict may occur because the roles of different individuals may overlap in some way (Role Conflict).

5. An individual can play a variety of different roles when the need arises (Role Flexibility).

6. In groups there are different degrees of clarity of roles played by and expected of different individuals (Role Differentiation).

Social Power: Certain individuals have the ability to influence the thinking, feelings, and behavior of other group members.

1. The act of guiding and coordinating group members (Leadership).
2. Leaders have been characterized as being either task-oriented or human relations-oriented. To the first type leader the task is all important; the second type is concerned with the task, but also with maintaining good member relations (Leadership Style).

3. In most democratic groups, leadership is diffused throughout the group, rarely concentrated in only one individual (Shared Leadership).

4. A process of determining who existing and potential leaders are and where they can be found (Leader Identification).

5. A process of supporting and stimulating leaders in their efforts to develop attitudes and skills and acquire knowledge to improve their performance as leaders (Leadership Training).

Evaluation: A formal or informal process of determining progress toward reaching group goals.

1. A continuous evaluation of the group to determine rate of progress, direction of the goal, and the group's position on the path toward the goal (Formative Evaluation).
Social Control: A process by which individuals or groups bring pressure on an individual to force him to behave in a certain way.

1. In a group there are stated and/or unstated rules of behavior that have been accepted as legitimate by the group and specify the kinds of behavior expected of members (Group Norms).

2. Groups set levels of performance that are expected of the individual members by the group itself (Group Standards).

3. A force coming from the group itself which makes individual members conform to the norms and standards of the group (Conformity Pressure).
Conflict: Wide differences in wants and opinions create tensions among group members.

1. A type of conflict that often develops when cooperation gives way to competition; individuals take sides and there is a feeling that there must be a winner and a loser (Win-Lose Situation).

2. Not all conflict is damaging; some is useful for improving discussions and creating new ideas (Productive Conflict).

3. Formal or informal mechanisms for a group to reduce or eliminate damaging conflict (Conflict Resolution).

Interpersonal Communication: The process where individuals send and receive information to and from each other on a face-to-face basis.

1. Sometimes a type of communication develops in a group and hinders productivity. It is characterized by individuals who perceive threat in the group (Defensive Communication).
2. Often poor communication results because members don't pay close attention and are not fully and accurately aware of what is being said (Listening).  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>AWARENESS</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>HELPFULNESS</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Extremely</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Group Goals:** Group goals are not just a simple sum of individual member goals. They have as their aim a desirable state for the group, not just the individual.

1. There are certain degrees to which group goals may be understood by all group members (Goal Clarity).  

2. There are different degrees of difficulty in completing group goals (Goal Difficulty).  

3. There are different degrees to which individual goals are similar or complementary to group goals (Goal Congruity).  

**Group Activities:** On-going processes that are carried out to facilitate groups in reaching their goals.

1. A decision-making process where everyone agrees on a course of action as best for the group, whether or not a person as an individual agrees with it (Consensus).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>AWARENESS</th>
<th>USE</th>
<th>HELPFULNESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. The degree to which group members apply effort and time to group activities (Participation).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Coordinated action where a group of individuals cooperate to complete a certain task (Teamwork).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A predesigned pattern for member interaction, for example, group discussion, panel discussion, debate, etc. (Group Technique).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The bringing together of individuals with a wide variety of needs, values and skills into a productive group (Group Formation).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The growth of a group from its inception to the final attainment of its goals (Group Development).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A systematic process of defining a problem, searching for alternative solutions, and choosing the best solution (Problem Solving).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Group Property Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Helpfulness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Forces acting on members to stay in the group are greater than those forces on them to leave the group (Group Cohesiveness).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The degree to which individuals in a group are similar in terms of socially relevant characteristics such as age, ethnic background, religious beliefs, and socio-economic status (Group Homogeneity).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The feeling, mood, or tone that permeats the group (Group Atmosphere).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The degree of physical and psychological closeness among group members (Group Intimacy).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The degree of independence a group has from a larger organization (Group Autonomy).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A group has reached this point when it is relatively stable and characterized by efficiency, productivity, and little damaging conflict (Group Maturity).</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION II

A. Please respond to each of the following statements. Remember, that the answers will be kept strictly confidential. Circle the number that best describes the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>________________</td>
<td>__________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I feel very comfortable working with groups. 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
2. I actively seek participation in groups, even outside of my regular work activities. 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
3. Trying to form new groups is often more trouble than it is worth. 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
4. I feel that groups can accomplish a great deal 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
5. I would much rather work with individuals than with groups. 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
6. I feel that Extension workers should try to work with groups whenever the situation seems appropriate. 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
7. If I had a choice, I would rather not work with groups. 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

B. To what extent are the following problems to you in your group work? Think of the Extension groups that you work with and check under the appropriate column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Problem</th>
<th>Slight Problem</th>
<th>Considerable Problem</th>
<th>Great Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leadership Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Group Productivity |               |                      |              |
3. Quarreling among members |               |                      |              |
4. Excessive dependence on you as a leader
5. Forming new groups
6. Maintaining participation
7. Own personal inadequacy in working with groups

If not mentioned here, please list on the back of this page major problems that you have in your group work.

SECTION III - Personal Data

1. Name

2. Age ________(years)

3. Parish or area assignment

4. How many years have you been employed by the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service? ________(years)

5. Educational Background
   a. Highest degree completed (check one)
      ______ Bachelor's degree
      ______ Master's degree
      ______ Doctoral degree
   b. What was the major field of study in which you earned your degree(s)?
      
      | Degree | Major Field of Study |
      |--------|----------------------|
      | Bachelor |                       |
      | Master   |                       |
6. What is your major work area in the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service? (check one)

[ ] Agriculture, primarily adults
[ ] Home economics, primarily adults
[ ] 4-H
[ ] Low-income
[ ] Community Resource Development
Reginald William Seiders, II was born in Washington D.C. on November 23, 1944. He graduated from Walter Johnson High School at Rockville, Maryland, in June 1962 and entered the University of Maryland that same year.

While at the University of Maryland, he participated in a cultural exchange tour of the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe with the University of Maryland Madrigal Singers, sponsored by the U. S. State Department. In 1967 he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture with a major in Animal Science.

Upon graduation from the University of Maryland, he entered the Peace Corps. He worked as an agricultural worker for three years in Colombia, South America.

He received a Master of Science degree in Agricultural Extension Education from the University of Tennessee in June, 1972.

He entered the Graduate School at Louisiana State University in August 1972. While at Louisiana State University he was employed as Administrative Assistant in the Office of International Programs.

He is married to Amalia Cassalins of Colombia, South America and they have a daughter, Molly, and a son, Joey.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Reginald William Seiders, II

Major Field: Extension Education

Title of Thesis: Training Needs of Professional Louisiana Extension Field Personnel in Group Dynamics

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

August 30, 1974