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FACTORS INFLUENCING FARMER  
PARTICIPATION IN A LEBANESE  
VILLAGE COOPERATIVE



الجمهورية اللبنانية  
مكتب وزير الدولة لشؤون التنمية الإدارية  
مركز مشاريع ودراسات القطاع العام

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# FACTORS INFLUENCING FARMERS' PARTICIPATION IN A LEBANESE VILLAGE COOPERATIVE<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

Developing agriculture and increasing its productivity are among the most urgent goals which governments in the developing countries have to achieve if they are to cope successfully with the increasing demand for food resulting from rapidly growing population. Organizing agricultural cooperatives has been regarded by most of these countries as an effective vehicle for bringing about change and development in the agricultural sector. Thus, their numbers have been increasing in various countries of the Middle East.<sup>3</sup> Several studies,<sup>4</sup> though, have shown that these cooperative societies have not been successful due, among other reasons, to lack of members' participation and support. The factors affecting participation of members in their cooperatives must be investigated if sound educational programs and policies are to be implemented to help remedy the situation. This study is an attempt in that direction.

Abadiyeh, where this study was conducted, is a village in Mount Lebanon about 14 kilometers east of Beirut, the capital of the country. It has about 5,000 inhabitants; half are Druze and the other half are Christians. The Abadiyeh cooperative, originated in 1937, was the first

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(3) For example, in Iraq the number has increased from 353 in 1964 to 408 in 1966 (Ward, 1967:5) and in Jordan, from 636 in 1964 to 688 in 1965 (Ministry of Social Affairs, 1966). In Lebanon, the total for 1968 was 26 cooperatives (Kubbeh, 1968).

(4) Examples of these studies are those conducted by Ward, 1967; Bin Tareef, 1963; Al-Haj, 1961; Yacoub and Haddad, 1970; and Zoumut, 1969.

cooperative to be organized in Lebanon.<sup>5</sup> The main objective of the cooperative was the marketing of vegetables and fruits, particularly grapes.

During the last decade, the Abadiyeh cooperative has not been functioning properly. Membership participation has been low, and the volume of business, as shown by cooperative records, has been declining. This study, therefore, was designed to investigate the influence of certain socio-economic and social-psychological factors on members' participation in the cooperative and to identify some of the reasons for its decline.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The authors intend to utilize a specific frame of reference: namely, Reeder's (1963 and 1967) theory of social action and decision making. This conceptual framework summarizes the findings from more than 20 years of research on the problem encompassing several field studies and numerous theses and reports. While not yet published in its final form, it is sufficiently developed to be useful for both research and applied programs. The frame of reference is a diverse one and is summarized by Reeder in about 32 specific propositions. It is beyond the scope of this study to review all aspects of it. Only the parts that are directly related to the problem investigated will be presented.

The theory recognizes four forms of social expression (social action) which are most commonly used in everyday affairs and in social research. These are: (1) belief and opinion statements, (2) expressed feelings and sentiments, (3) stated hypothetical actions, and (4) reported or observed gross behavioral responses. Since participation in cooperatives is an example of a gross behavioral response, it is considered as one form of social action.

The theory further states that in a particular social action situation, such as participating in a cooperative society, each actor (farmer or a member) will be influenced by three main types of variables which are possessed by him. These are: (1) his reference category characteristics, such as his age, level of education, income, size of farm, etc., (2) his past social actions and experiences, and (3) his beliefs and disbeliefs. Not all reference categories possessed by the actor nor all of his past

(5) A brief description of the village of Abadiyeh and its cooperative appears in Yacoub and Haddad, 1970, pp. 2-3.

social actions and experiences nor all of his beliefs are essentially relevant to social action. A few of each will be perceived as more relevant than others in a particular social action situation. The theory claims that particular reference categories and particular actions have socially shared meanings in any given situation. Yacoub (1967) found that particular reference categories, such as education, income, occupation and religious affiliation, have different meanings in relation to different referents and in different situations. Reference categories and past experiences, therefore, are translated into beliefs and disbeliefs (meanings), thus consolidating the three main types of variables previously mentioned into one, namely beliefs and disbeliefs of the actor.

The beliefs and disbeliefs of the actor will fall into one or more of ten different types. These ten types of beliefs and disbeliefs are the elements of decision making and of social action. These are: (1) belief orientations, (2) goals, (3) value standards, (4) habits and customs, (5) expectations, (6) self-commitments, (7) force, (8) opportunity, (9) ability, and (10) support. The specific beliefs and disbeliefs which make up the relevant cluster for any social action situation may come from one or from more of these elements. None of the elements is always present in every relevant cluster; there are sufficient causes for action but there are no necessary causes.

This study will not deal with all of the ten elements treated in Reeder's conceptual framework; it will only deal with five of the cognitive elements which were thought to be most relevant to participation in the Abadiyeh cooperative: namely, belief orientations, ability, goals, expectations and support. It will also investigate the influence of seven reference category variables—namely, occupation, tenure status, size of farm, age, education, income derived from agriculture, and religious affiliation—on participation in the cooperative. In addition, it will deal with two attitudinal behavioral response variables. These are attitudes, opinions, and satisfaction which is a sentiment.

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A total of 100 members in the Abadiyeh cooperative were selected at random from its list of 141 members for the year 1967. The member-

ship list was then compared with that of early 1966; 113 names which appeared on the 1966 list but were not on the 1967 one were considered drop-outs. Of these, 50 were randomly selected resulting in an original total sample of 150. However, the data actually were collected only from 139 respondents of which 94 were members and 45 were drop-outs.

A questionnaire was prepared and data were obtained during the summer of 1968, by using face-to-face interviewing. The first few interviews were done at the cooperative center in Abadiyeh but it was discovered early that it was difficult to have privacy with the interviewees. Home visits were utilized thereafter.

### PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Many researchers have demonstrated the influence of certain background variables such as education, age, sex, occupation and income on behavior, particularly on adoption and organizational participation. Al-Haj (1968:30-31), for example, demonstrated that education, size of the farm and the farmer's proportion of income derived from agriculture were directly related to rate of adoption of recommended farm practices among Lebanese wheat growers while age was inversely related. Hammad (1968:61), in studying the relative effectiveness of various extension methods in the Abey-area of Mount Lebanon, found positive relationships between educational levels of farmers, size of farms, and land tenure status and adoption of recommended farm practices; while no such associations were found for age, income derived from farming, and years of farming experience. Yacoub and Wassink (1969:15-19) found that the size of farm operated was significantly related to the growing of the sunflower crop by farmers of the Northern Beqa'a Valley of Lebanon, while age and level of education were not.

Adoption of recommended farm practices, like participation in cooperatives, is considered, according to Reeder's frame of reference, as one form of social actoin, namely observed behavioral response. Therefore, one of the questions which this study sought to answer was: What background or reference category variables, if possessed by a cooperative member, may influence his actions and increase his participation in it?

It must be noted, however, that these background variables do not by themselves answer the question of why members of the Abadiyeh cooperative behave towards it as they do. Such variables were called "static" by Beal (1956) in the sense that they are relatively difficult to change by group members or leaders. There are other factors that seem to be significantly related to participation which Beal called "dynamic." According to his terminology, cognitive factors such as ability, belief orientations, support, expectations, goals, attitudes and satisfaction are regarded as "dynamic variables." They are important not only to understand the phenomenon of participation but also to predict behavior. Various studies have demonstrated the influence of one or more of these cognitive factors on behavior. Fetter (1961:24-26), in studying attitudes of Beqa'a farmers, suggested that one of the reasons for the failure of cooperatives in Lebanon was farmers' *beliefs* in individualism and independent action.

Beal (1955 a) found, in a participation survey of cooperative members, that the factor most highly related to participation was the member's basic knowledge and understanding of cooperative organization and operation. Folkman (1955:25), in studying membership relations in six Arkansas farmers' purchasing cooperatives, related members' knowledge of responsibilities to their active participation in those cooperatives. Highly participating members were found to have more knowledge of specific responsibilities than were poorly participating members and patrons. Knowledge of how sunflowers were to be planted was found to be positively and significantly related to their adoption of the new crop by Lebanese farmers (Yacoub and Wassink, 1969:26). Knowledge in this current study was considered to be one dimension of the *ability* factor.

In his sociological evaluation of a bedouin settlement project in Jordan, Yacoub (1969:52) found that the *expectations* of other family members, relatives and friends were important factors in influencing settlers and workers in their decisions to join the settlement. In the same study, he also found that the desires (*goal*) for a more secure life and that of owning agricultural and housing units in the Jafr settlement project were very strong motivating forces which caused settlers and workers to join the settlement.

A high correlation was reported by Folkman (1955:21) between *attitudes* toward a cooperative and the degree of participation in it. John



(1943:30) indicated that specific attitudes toward its management, board of directors, and officers tended to influence the general attitude and consequently participation in the cooperative. Attitudes toward the sunflower as a crop was found by Yacoub and Wassink (1969:25-26) to be highly related to its adoption.

Homans (1961:282) admitted, in a sense, that *satisfaction* was related to behavior; but Beal (1955 b) made it clear that research, as well as every day observation, shows that there is a high relationship between a member's satisfaction with his cooperative and his participation in it.

### HYPOTHESES AND MEASUREMENTS OF VARIABLES

Two major hypotheses, one dealing with the influence of certain reference category variables and the other with the effect of selected cognitive variables on participation, were set up for this study.

*Hypothesis I:* Social participation in the cooperative is related to a member's occupation, land tenure status, size of farm owned, level of education, age, amount of income derived from agriculture and religious affiliation.

*Hypothesis II:* A member's participation in the cooperative is influenced by his belief orientation, ability, goals, expectations, support, opinions or attitudes and satisfaction in relation to the cooperative.

The dependent variable, the degree of social participation of farmers in the Abadiyeh cooperative, was measured by using five items related to the respondents' participation in the cooperative. A participatoin score was developed by assigning weights for the responses for each item in decreasing order where the most favorable response received the highest score and the least favorable a score of "0". The items used were as follows:

1. Proportion of agricultural produce marketed through the cooperative in 1967.
2. Number of public meetings attended during the years 1966 and 1967.

3. Holding an office in the cooperative.
4. Talking favorably about the cooperative.
5. Trying to recruit members for the cooperative.

A total participation score for each respondent was then determined by adding the scores which he received on all five items. Respondents were then classified into "low" and "high" participants. Drop-outs from the cooperative were considered as non-participants.

For each respondent, a total score also was developed for each of the seven cognitive or "dynamic" independent variables treated in the study by adding the scores which the respondent received on each dimension used to measure the variable.

### ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Contrary to what was expected, none of the seven reference category variables investigated was found to be significantly related to participation in the cooperative (See Appendix, Tables 1-7). It is evident, from the findings presented below, that members' participation in the Abadiyeh cooperative can only be explained in terms of the differences which they may possess on the various cognitive variables treated.

#### The Belief Factor

It was hypothesized that beliefs of the respondents toward cooperation, cooperatives and individualism are positively related to their participation in the cooperative. The more favorable the beliefs are in cooperation and cooperatives and the less favorable they are toward individualism the greater is the participation and vice-versa.

The belief variable was tested by using 16 different statements, five of which tested farmers' belief in cooperation, six their belief in cooperatives and the remaining five their belief in individualism. These statements were rated on a scale ranging from strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, to strongly disagree. A composite score of the belief factor was computed for each respondent by adding the total scores which he received on the above three dimensions.

Data showed that only belief toward cooperatives, out of the three dimensions which were used to measure the belief variable, was significantly related to participation. The relationship between participation and each of the other two dimensions, namely belief in cooperation and belief in individualism, was in the expected direction but not statistically significant at the .05 level (See Table 10). When the scores of the three dimensions, though, were combined to form a composite belief score for each respondent, it was found that the beliefs of about four-fifths of the high participants were favorable as compared to a little over one-third (36%) of the non-participants who held favorable beliefs toward the three dimensions investigated (Table 1). The relationship between respondents'

Table 1. The belief factor in relation to participation, Summer 1968.

Composite total belief score	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unfavorable (score 0-21)	29	64	9	24	12	21	50	36
Favorable (score 22-32)	16	36	28	76	45	79	89	64
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 23.53$ ; 2 d.f.;  $P < 0.001$ ;  $\bar{C} = 0.56$ .

beliefs and participation in the cooperative was significant at the 0.001 level. The more favorable their beliefs were, the higher was their participation in the Abadiyeh cooperative.

#### The Ability Factor

Ability, measured by respondent's perceived ability to market outside the cooperative, knowledge about the cooperative and influence in it, is related to participation. The more able he is to market outside the

cooperative, the less knowledge he has about it and the less influence he has in it, the less will be his participation and vice-versa.

Most of the respondents (a total of 115) felt that they were able to market their crops outside the cooperative. Three-fourths of them marketed some of their products outside the village on their own. The other two marketing channels available to members were through middlemen and through shops or families in the village; this was mentioned by 64% and 36% of the respondents respectively (Table 2).

Table 2. Marketing channels available other than the cooperative, (N = 115), Summer 1968.

Channels for marketing	No. of times mentioned*	Percent
Market products outside the village on my own	86	74
Market through a middleman	74	64
Sell to shops and/or families in the village	41	36

\* More than one marketing channel was mentioned by most of the respondents which accounted for a greater number than the original N.

Ability to market outside the cooperative was significantly related to participation. It was found that those who were more able to depend on the above marketing channels participated less in the cooperative than those who were unable to depend on them.

Knowledge of cooperative purposes, benefits and advantages as well as respondents' knowledge of their own responsibilities toward the cooperative were not adequate. Over a half of the respondents (53%) knew of only one or two of the purposes, benefits and advantages of the cooperative while the rest knew of from three to eight of them. Those who knew almost nothing about their responsibilities toward the cooperative

comprised 76% of the respondents. When members' knowledge of who should own the cooperative was examined, it was found that two-thirds of them knew that members should own it. The proportion of those who did not know was larger for the non-participants than for the high participants.

The amount of power and influence that one perceives himself to have in the cooperative was considered as a third dimension of the ability factor. Only about one-fifth of the respondents felt that they had much power and influence in the cooperative. One-third felt that they had some influence while the majority, about one-half, felt that they had little or no influence in the Abadiyeh cooperative. A higher percentage of high participants than of both low and non-participants felt that they had much power and influence in the cooperative. The relationship between a members' participation in the cooperative and the amount of power and influence that he perceived himself to have in it was significant at the 0.001 level.

When the three dimensions-of ability were combined and an ability score was derived, it was found that about three-fourths (72%) of the high participants had a "high" ability score as compared to only 42% of the non-participants who had such a score (Table 3). More non than

Table 3. The ability factor in relation to participation, Summer 1968.

Composite total ability score	Non- participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
"Low" (score 0-5)	26	58	9	24	16	28	51	37
"High" (score 6-16)	19	42	28	76	41	72	88	63
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$\chi^2 = 2.87$ ; 2 d.f.;  $P < 0.01$ ;  $\bar{C} = 0.43$ .

high participants, 58% as compared to 28% respectively, had a "low" ability score. The ability dimension did not discriminate between the low

and high participant groups. Ability and participation in the cooperative were significantly related at the 0.05 level.

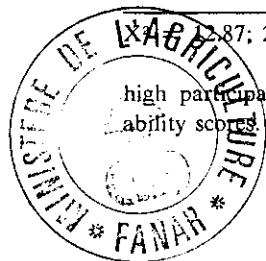
### The Expectation Factor

Expectations to market through the cooperative in terms of one's own, neighbors', and family's expectations, were hypothesized to be positively related to participation in the cooperative. The greater the expectations the individual perceives, the greater his participation and vice-versa.

The majority (85%) of the respondents "strongly" or "very strongly" expected themselves to market all their crops through the cooperative as compared to only 15% who expected themselves "fairly strongly" to "not strongly at all" to do so. A higher percentage of the high participants had very strong self expectations to market all their crops through the cooperative than did either low or non-participants. The relationship between self expectations to market all crops through the cooperative and participation in it was significant at the 0.01 level.

Neighbor's and family's expectations for members to market all their crops through the cooperative was also evident. Since Arab societies, especially in the rural areas, are generally characterized by strong neighborhood and family ties it is assumed that the expectations of such primary groups play significant roles in influencing members' decisions and behavior. More than half of the respondents (54%) were influenced strongly by neighbors' expectations to market all crops through the cooperative, while 46% were not at all influenced. In contrast, strong family expectations to market all crops through the Abadiyeh cooperative was perceived by 44% of the respondents while it was perceived to be not at all strong by 56% of them. The proportion of high participants who were expected either strongly or very strongly by their neighbors or family members to market all crops through the cooperative was somewhat higher than that of the non-participants who were in the same expectation categories. Both neighbor's and family's expectations were significantly related to participation.

When the influence of the total expectation factor on participation was investigated, it was found that nearly one-fourth (23%) of the high



participants had "low" expectation scores in contrast to about one-half (46%) who had "high" scores. On the other hand, 56% of the non-participants had "low" expectation scores and only 22% had "high" scores. Expectations were significantly related to participation in the cooperative at the 0.01 level (Table 4).

Table 4. The expectation factor in relation to participation, Summer 1968.

Composite total expectation score	Non- participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
"Low" (score 0-3)	25	56	18	49	13	23	56	40
"Medium" (score 4-6)	10	22	10	27	18	31	38	27
"High" (score 7-9)	10	22	9	24	26	46	45	33
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 13.64$ ; 4 d.f.;  $P < 0.01$ ;  $\bar{C} = 0.41$ .

#### The Goal and Motive Factor

The feeling that goals and motives of the respondents are being achieved is positively related to their participation in the cooperative. The more those goals and motives are perceived by the respondents as being satisfied, the greater will be their participation and vice-versa.

The goals and motives of the respondents for joining the Abadiyah cooperative were mainly economical in nature such as to market crops through the cooperative and to obtain credit, fertilizers, and chemicals from the cooperative. Almost all of the interviewees (97%) mentioned the attainment of an economic goal as a motive for joining the cooperative. Twenty-four percent gave the attainment of moral goals, such as spreading the message of cooperation, raising the socio-economic level of farmers, and strengthening the cooperative society which in turn would help the

village to progress, as reasons for joining. Only seven percent of the respondents had recognition and esteem motives for joining the cooperative.

When respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they feel that these goals have been met, 27% said "to a great extent" while 43% and 30% felt that the goals have been met "to some" and "to a little or no extent," respectively (Table 5). About two fifths (41%) of the high

Table 5. The achievement of goals and motives in relation to participation, Summer 1968.

Extent of goal achievement	Non- participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
To a little or no extent	25	56	9	24	7	12	41	30
To some extent	15	33	18	49	27	47	60	43
To a great extent	5	11	10	27	23	41	38	27
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 25.79$ ; 4 d.f.;  $P < 0.001$ ;  $\bar{C} = 0.54$ .

participants as compared to about one-fourth (27%) and one-tenth (11%) of low and non-participants, respectively, said that they had achieved their goals and motives to a great extent. On the other hand, about one-tenth (12%) of the former group of participants as compared to about three-fifths (56%) of the latter group achieved their goals to a little or no extent. The relationship between farmers' perceived achievement of their goals and their participation in the cooperative was significant at the 0.001 level.

#### The Support Factor

It was hypothesized that the degree of support received from family, close friends, neighbors and cooperative officials to market all crops through the cooperative is related to participation. The greater the

amount of support the individual perceives himself as having, the greater his participation and vice-versa.

The proportion of respondents receiving support from cooperative officials and family members to market all their crops through the cooperative was greater than that received from close friends and neighbors. About nine-tenths (87%) and one-half of the respondents indicated that they had received support from cooperative officials and family members, respectively, to market crops through the cooperative. In comparison, about one-third (30%) and one-fourth (26%) of the respondents perceived having the support of their close friends and neighbors, respectively, for marketing crops through the cooperative.

Three out of four dimensions of support, namely the support of the family, close friends, and cooperative officials were significantly related to participation (See Table 10). Neighbors' support on the other hand, was not related to participation.

When all four dimensions of support were combined for each respondent to form his composite total support score, it was found that interviewees have divided themselves equally between "low" and "high" composite support scores (Table 6). A higher percentage of non-participants

Table 6. The support factor in relation to participation, Summer 1968.

Composite total support score	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
"Low" (score 0-5)	33	73	18	49	18	32	69	50
"High" (score 6-8)	12	27	19	51	39	68	70	50
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 17.66$ ; 2 d.f.;  $P < 0.001$ ;  $\bar{C} = 0.49$ .

than either of low or high participants had "low" support score, while the proportion in each of the latter two participant groups who had "high" support scores was higher than that in the non-participant group (Table 6). Support was significantly related to participation in the co-

operative at the 0.001 level. The greater the amount of support the farmer perceived himself to have for marketing all his crops through the cooperative, the more he would tend to participate in the cooperative activities.

### The Opinions or Attitudes Factor

It was assumed that an individual's opinions and attitudes toward the cooperative were positively related to his participation in it and the more favorable they were, the higher would be his participation and vice-versa.

Attitudes and opinions toward the cooperative were measured by using nine attitudinal statements. Responses, ranged on a five intervalled scale, ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. An attitude score was developed for each respondent which was then related to his participation score. Data showed that respondents had divided themselves nearly equally between "unfavorable" and "favorable" opinions and attitudes toward the Abadiyeh cooperative. Furthermore, it was found that more non-participants than either low or high participants had unfavorable opinions and attitudes toward the cooperative. The percentage of those who had favorable attitudes was higher in the high and the low participant groups than in the non-participant group; 65 and 54% as compared to 40% respectively (Table 7). Opinions and attitudes toward

Table 7. Opinions and attitudes toward the cooperative in relation to participation, Summer 1968.

Opinions and attitudes	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unfavorable (score 0-12)	27	60	17	46	20	35	64	46
Favorable (score 13-18)	18	40	20	54	37	65	75	54
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 6.28$ ; 2 d.f.;  $P < 0.05$ ;  $\bar{C} = 0.30$ .

the cooperative were significantly related to participation in it at the 0.05 level.

### The Satisfaction Factor

It was hypothesized that an individual's satisfaction with the cooperative was related to his participation in it. The greater the satisfaction, the higher will be his participation and vice-versa.

Three dimensions of the satisfaction factor were investigated: the respondents' satisfaction with the way the cooperative has marketed his products; his satisfaction with the efficiency of its administration namely the manager, the board of directors and the officers; and finally his satisfaction with the cooperative as a whole.

When respondents were asked how efficient the cooperative was in marketing their products, only one-fifth felt it was very efficient compared to two-fifths (38%) who felt that the cooperative was inefficient. The remaining two-fifths considered the cooperative to be somewhat efficient. Responses given for inefficient marketing included "giving crops to middlemen on credit," "vegetables are sold in the Beirut market in the absence of the cooperative official in charge," "favoritism in selling the crops of some members," and "inefficient control on the sale of agricultural produce." Data showed that a little less than one-tenth of the non-participants as compared to one-third of the high participants considered the cooperative to be "very efficient." Satisfaction with the way agricultural products were marketed by the cooperative and participation were significantly related at the 0.001 level.

Satisfaction of the sampled population with the cooperative administration was relatively low. Only two-fifths of the respondents considered the manager to be "very efficient" and even lower proportions, about one-fifth and one-third, respectively, considered the board of directors and the officers to be in this category. Approximately one-fifth to one-fourth of the respondents felt that the manager, the board of directors, and the officers were little efficient or inefficient (Table 8). Justification for the

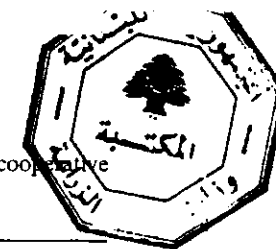


Table 8. Respondents' satisfaction with the efficiency of the cooperative administration, Summer 1968.

Perception of efficiency	Cooperative administration					
	The manager		The board of directors		The officers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very efficient	55	40	30	22	50	36
Somewhat efficient	56	40	68	49	54	39
Little or inefficient	28	20	41	29	35	25
Total	139	100	139	100	139	100

inefficient administration responses included: "insufficient emphasis on grading of crops," "disorganization," "bad control over matters," "cooperative regulations were not enforced," "no distribution of profits," "responsible persons do not live in the village all year," and "inefficiency in sending invitations to members in time to attend general meetings held by the cooperative." When satisfaction with the efficiency of the cooperative administration as a whole was related to participation, it was found that more high participants than low and non-participants perceived administration efficiency to be high. The relationship, though it was in the expected direction, was not significant at the 0.05 level.

One important measure of satisfaction with the cooperative in general is the feeling of who owns it. One would expect most of the interviewees, if they were satisfied with it, to indicate that members owned the cooperative. However, analysis of the responses showed that only a little over two-fifths (43%) of those interviewed felt that the cooperative was owned by its members. A similar proportion felt that the cooperative was owned by its administration. Fourteen percent did not know who owned the cooperative.

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When respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the cooperative as a whole, only one-fifth (19%) felt that they were very well satisfied in comparison to about two-fifths (37%), who said they were little or not satisfied at all. The remaining two-fifths considered themselves to be satisfied with it. One-fourth of those who were not satisfied with the cooperative believed that certain people were using the cooperative for their own personal interests and private benefits, such as to become recognized and famous, to be able to exert more influence, and to benefit financially. In addition, they felt that there might be some thievery in the cooperative and they questioned where money went. Practicing favoritism within the cooperative and lack of services provided by the cooperative to members, such as giving credit, chemicals and fertilizers, and transporting of crops from the farms, were mentioned as sources of dissatisfaction. Shortages of boxes, which were owned by the cooperative and distributed to members for marketing purposes, and the way these boxes were handled was another source of dissatisfaction to 17% of the respondents. Still 12% of them were dissatisfied with the cooperative because of the prevailing politics and the strong family and sectarian ties in the village. This included responses such as: "presence of religious and familial prejudice," "the cooperative is the property of one family and its relatives," and "many members joined just to serve the political interests of a few persons." Members' dishonesty and inefficiency was mentioned by nine percent of the respondents. This included "members cheat in grading," "disobey the laws," "do not return the boxes they have taken from the cooperative," and "they are bad and uncooperative." The analysis of the data showed that members' satisfaction with the cooperative and the degree of their participation were positively and significantly related at the 0.001 level.

When all of the various aspects of satisfaction were considered jointly to form a composite total satisfaction score, it was found that nearly two-thirds (62%) of the non-participants were "dissatisfied" as compared to only one-tenth of them who were "very well satisfied" with the cooperative. On the other hand, only about one-fifth (17%) of the high participants were "dissatisfied" as compared to nearly one-third of them who were "very well satisfied" (Table 9). The relationship between re-

Table 9. The satisfaction factor in relation to participation, Summer 1968.

Composite total satisfaction score	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Dissatisfied (score 0.0-2.6)	28	62	13	35	10	17	51	37
Somewhat satisfied (score 2.7-5.3)	12	27	18	49	30	53	60	43
Very well satisfied (score 5.4-8.0)	5	11	6	16	17	30	28	20
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$$X^2 = 22.75; 4 \text{ d.f.}; P < 0.001; \bar{C} = 0.51.$$

spondents' satisfaction with the cooperative and their participation was significant at the 0.001 level. The greater the amount of satisfaction the farmer had, the higher was his participation in the Abadiyeh cooperative.

#### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study were inconsistent with those of other studies which showed that a definite relationship existed between certain personal characteristics and social participation. None of the reference categories investigated was found to be related to participation. In this particular case, the cognitive variables (elements of social action) were found to be far more important in explaining behavior than the selected personal variables. One can conclude, therefore, that this part of Reeder's conceptual framework proved to be valuable in explaining why some members participate in the Abadiyeh cooperative while others do not. The relationships between the cognitive independent variables investigated, their dimensions and participation in the cooperative are summarized in Table 10.

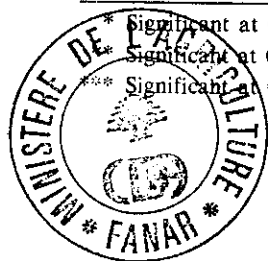
Table 10. Summary of cognitive factors as they affect farmers' participation in the Abadiyeh cooperative, Summer 1968.

Factor	X <sup>2</sup>	d.f.	$\bar{C}$
The belief factor	23.53***	2	0.56
Belief in cooperation	1.53	2	0.15
Belief in cooperatives	8.13*	2	0.44
Belief in individualism	4.34	4	0.24
The ability factor	12.87**	2	0.43
Ability to market outside the cooperative	12.70*	4	0.39
Knowledge about the cooperative	5.99*	2	0.30
Power and influence in the cooperative	37.70***	4	0.52
The expectations' factor	13.64**	4	0.41
Self expectations	14.04**	4	0.41
Neighbors' expectations	9.40	6	0.32
Family expectations	11.60*	4	0.38
The goals and motives factor, including the economic goal	25.79***	4	0.54
The support factor	17.66***	2	0.49
Family support	21.32***	2	0.53
Close friends' support	6.33*	2	0.30
Neighbors' support	1.64	2	0.16
Cooperative officials' support	7.66*	2	0.33
Opinions and attitudes toward the cooperative	6.28*	2	0.30
The satisfaction factor	22.75***	4	0.51
Satisfaction with the cooperative efficiency in marketing	24.48***	4	0.52
Satisfaction with the administration efficiency	7.69	4	0.31
Satisfaction with the cooperative in general	22.02***	4	0.50

\* Significant at 0.05 level.

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level.

\*\*\* Significant at 0.001 level.



Based on the data obtained, one can conclude that some of the factors which seemed to hinder the development of the cooperative were: Members' inadequate knowledge about the cooperative and cooperation, monopoly of power in the cooperative by a few families of the same political and sectarian line, administration of the cooperative, members' inefficiency and dishonesty, marketing problems, favoritism and perceived lack of benefits. If farmers are to participate effectively in the cooperative, the factors of belief orientations, ability, expectations, goals and motives, support, opinions and attitudes, and satisfaction with respect to the cooperative and the aspects of it need to be changed from unfavorable to favorable. To accomplish this, it is essential to take actions on three levels: The Government, the Cooperative Department, and the Abadiyeh Cooperative.

A. *On the Government Level:*

There is a need on the national level for a well planned agricultural policy. Industrialization of agriculture, regional specialization of agricultural production, and development of cooperatives may well be considered. In relation to cooperatives the following recommendations may be advanced for government consideration:

1. The government has to supply the Cooperative Department with a greater number of trained personnel. Thus the organization will be more able to assist with technical help, to undergo more effective training programs for its personnel as well as for cooperative members. In this sense it will be able to support the cooperative movement through the diffusion of knowledge, the creation of awareness and need, and the teaching of cooperative skills.
2. The government should provide loan funds for financing cooperatives perhaps through the establishment of a cooperative bank to advance loans. In this sense the ability of cooperatives to stand on their own feet financially would be enhanced by such government support.
3. Establishing an integrated cooperative market in Beirut where cooperatives could reach the consumers directly taking advantage of economies of scale in handling and management.



*B. On the Cooperative Department Level:*

Government support would reflect on the ability of the Cooperative Department to work effectively in promoting its goals of establishing and organizing cooperatives, of training of personnel and supervising of cooperatives.

1. The Cooperative Department needs to undergo an efficient publicity and education programs for farm people regarding cooperatives; using mass media, and improving the bulletin it issues monthly so that it can create awareness, need for and knowledge of cooperative action to stimulate a high degree of participation in the cooperatives.
2. It should hold more conferences in different parts of the country where cooperative members can be involved and educated through discussion and through sharing of each other's experience.
3. It should work, through government help and backing, toward the formation of a national cooperative body where representatives of different cooperatives, including those of Abadiyeh Cooperative, can come together. This body can constitute different sub-committees to facilitate the involvement and participation of local people in the identification of problems, planning, evaluation and action. Such an involvement may prove to be valuable in helping the Cooperative Department realize its objectives better and in helping the cooperative members to gain experience, education, satisfaction and a more efficient participation in their cooperatives.
4. Sponsoring, with the help of the government, of cooperative exhibits where the best members are publicly rewarded on their achievement.
5. The Cooperative Department should exert control over the activities and the accounts of cooperatives and see that they function properly.

*C. On the Local Level:*

1. The administration of the Abadiyeh Cooperative must compete with other middlemen in the village in providing for an efficient marketing of its members' products following the rules of cooperative marketing where the same quality of product should receive the same price, avoiding any favoritism to relatives and friends to help members meet their goal of higher returns from cooperative marketing. When such a goal is realized, their beliefs and attitudes toward cooperation will change and their ability to market outside the cooperative will decrease. The Motto should be first come first serve.
2. In the areas of marketing again, the responsible official needs to be more careful in handling and keeping good control over what the members produce, especially when this is taken to Beirut markets. Using more than one middleman in the city market and selling crops-for cash may be desirable.
3. Political interests should be eliminated from the cooperative. There is no room for politics, familism, and sectarianism in cooperation. Membership must be based on willingness to cooperate honestly and responsibly. An opportunity should be given to different families and sects to be represented on the board of directors so that none would feel deprived and powerless, but rather feel that the cooperative supports all its members equally.
4. The cooperative staff must involve its members in the activities of the cooperative by giving them a chance to discuss problems and greavances in public meetings and to take their suggestions into consideration. It must also give full accounts of its activities, accomplishments, ways money is being spent so that doubts in the minds of members can be eliminated. There is a high degree of ignorance about goals and objectives of the cooperative, members' responsibilities, etc... Members are not informed or educated. Hence the cooperative through its meetings and discussions must diffuse this information. Thus members become satisfied and able through knowledge to participate more actively.

Such a knowledge will influence their beliefs and values positively.

5. More subcommittees (there is only one) should be created to ensure greater involvement and participation of members and to give them the opportunity to learn and get trained for responsible action. Perhaps all or most members can be involved in one of the committees. One criterion of involving members in committees should be the involvement of joint family heads since their status-role implies that they are the social decision makers in the family.
6. Officials working in the cooperative must be chosen on the basis of merit rather than family or friendship ties. The head of the board of directors as well as members of the board should be farmers residing in the village and not outsiders. This will make the members more satisfied with the administration and more willing to participate.
7. The administration of the cooperative needs to be more organized, to keep good control over the cooperative property especially in handling the fruit and produce boxes that it offers to members, to distribute profits, if any, among its members, and to offer sufficient services at the time they are needed.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Occupation in relation to participation in the cooperative, Summer 1968.

Occupation	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Full time farmer	22	49	16	43	33	58	71	51
Part time farmer	23	51	21	57	24	42	68	49
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 2.06$ ; 2 d.f.;  $P > 0.05$ ;  $C = 0.18$ .

Table 2. Land tenure in relation to participation in the cooperative, Summer 1968.

Land tenancy status	Non- participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Owner operator	35	78	35	94	53	93	123	89
Tenant	1	2	1	3	1	2	3	2
Both	9	20	1	3	3	5	13	9
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 9.19$ ; 4 d.f.;  $P > 0.05$ ;  $\bar{C} = .30$ .



Table 3. Total land ownership in relation to participation in the cooperative, Summer 1968.

Land ownership	Non- participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 10 donums*	20	44	12	32	14	25	46	33
10-19 donums	13	29	8	22	22	39	43	31
20-29 donums	3	7	10	27	10	17	23	17
30 donums or more	9	20	7	19	11	19	27	19
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 10.35$ ; 6 d.f.;  $P > 0.05$ ;  $\bar{C} = .33$ .

\* 1 donum = 1,000 square meters.

Table 4. Level of education of members in relation to participation in the cooperative, Summer 1968.

Level of education	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Illiterate	6	13	3	8	7	12	16	12
Read and write only	6	13	6	16	14	25	26	19
Elementary education	24	54	17	46	29	51	70	50
High education*	9	20	11	30	7	12	27	19
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 6.16$ ; 6 d.f.;  $P > 0.05$ ;  $\bar{C} = .26$ .

\* Includes secondary and university education.

Table 5. Age of members in relation to participation in the cooperative, Summer 1968.

Age	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
35 years or less	7	16	6	16	4	7	17	12
36-45 years	11	24	10	27	9	16	30	22
46-55 years	11	24	4	11	10	17	25	18
56 years or more	16	36	17	46	34	60	67	48
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 8.92$ ; 6 d.f.;  $P > 0.05$ ;  $\bar{C} = .31$ .

Table 6. Proportion of income derived from farming in relation to participation in the cooperative, Summer 1968.

Proportion of income from farming	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	25% or less	20	44	18	49	20	35	58
26-50%	7	16	9	24	12	21	28	20
51-100%	18	40	10	27	25	54	53	38
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 3.65$ ; 4 d.f.;  $P > 0.05$ ;  $C = .22$ .

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Table 7. Religion in relation to participation in the cooperative, Summer 1968.

Religion	Non-participants		Low participants		High participants		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Christian	11	24	6	16	15	26	32
Druze	34	76	31	84	42	74	107	77
Total	45	100	37	100	57	100	139	100

$X^2 = 1.37$ ; 2 d.f.;  $P > 0.05$ ;  $C = .14$ .

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