

## **Membership, Net-working and the Decision Making Process: A Study of Voluntary Organisations in Meghalaya**

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### *Abstract*

*Membership, net-working and the decision-making process are considered to be important parameters which could make a voluntary organisation (VO) robust and effective. While the members make meaningful contributions towards the formation of social capital, growth and sustenance of VOs; the effective net-working and prompt decision-making help these organisations to carry out their activities smoothly and effectively. Based on the empirical data collected from 10 VOs which are located in East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya, the present paper explains the dynamics of membership, nature of net-working and prevailing decision-making process of these VOs. The study observed that the nature of membership in the VOs is varied which can be categorised into six types such as voluntary membership, permanent membership, honorary membership, membership by invite, membership by admission and institutional membership. A durable and effective network system, robust decision-making process and the roles performed by the functionaries of VOs also contribute significantly towards achieving their desired goals. The study further revealed that the incumbent VOs have made sincere efforts and to a great extent have been successful in establishing an effective network. The decision-making process in these VOs is not confined to a rigid and centralised pattern though at times, it is the top functionaries who determine the course of the decision-making. While the prevailing networks in VOs has accelerated the collaborative ventures, a relatively decentralised decision-making process provided an added advantage to take quick, appropriate and timely decisions.*

**Key words: Membership, Functionaries, Net-working, Decision-making**

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