



AN OVERVIEW ON ROLE OF YOUTHS IN CO-OPERATION: PRINCIPLES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

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Cite This Article: Dr. A. Vadivelu & Dr. B. R. Kiran, "An Overview on Role of Youths in Co-Operation: Principles, Achievements and Challenges", International Journal of Computational Research and Development, Volume 1, Issue 1, Page Number 120-124, 2016.

Abstract:

In this review paper we have reviewed the role of youths in co-operation. Siddanthi (2016) reported that Co-operative movement emerged as third sector due to extreme implications of capitalism and socialism. The term cooperation means idea of "living together and working together", which is the product of industrial revolution in England. Robert Owen, father of cooperative movement proposed ideals of cooperation in his "Report on the Poor". In 1844 group of 28 weavers met in chart list hall in Rochdale town and established the first consumer cooperative store named as "Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society" with initial capital of £ 28 pounds, based on the inspiration of ROBERT OWEN. Cooperative is a form of an organization in which members with limited resources can join together and collectively strive to achieve their economics goals. The key underplaying principles which drive the cooperative model are Mutual help collective bargaining and each for All, All for Each.

Key Words: Youths Role, Co-Operation, Principles, Opportunities & Challenges

Introduction:

India has a strong youth population; with more than 50 % of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35. Every third person in an Indian city today is youth. By 2020, India is set to become the world's youngest country with 64% of its population in the working age group. Based on this reality, the cooperatives in India have to be the preferred model by 2020; they have to devise effective communication strategies based on powerful messages to attract the youth (Sanjay Kumar Verma, 2016).

Co-operative movement in our country shall not only stay but also grow in times to come. In spite of the drawbacks experienced in the working and administration of the co-operative societies, they have positively contributed to the growth and development of the national economy. Promotion of thrift, self-help and mutual aid are the fundamental principles of co-operation. The orientations of commercial organization and co-operative organizations are basically different. In a commercial organization, earning and maximizing the profits is the sole motive; whereas in a co-operative organization profit cannot be the sole motive (<https://www.wirc-icai.org/material/registration%20of%20societies>).

Principles of Co-Operative Sector:

- ✓ A co-operative Society is a body corporate registered under the applicable state Act with perpetual succession having a common seal. It can acquire, hold and dispose of properties, enter into contracts and it can sue and it can be sued.
- ✓ Co-operative Society is essentially an organization or an association of persons who have come together for the common purpose of economic development or for mutual help.
- ✓ The Co-operative societies office bearers/executive committee is elected as per democratic election procedure. The Co-operative Society function under the principle of self help and mutual help which means each will help for themselves and all will help others.
- ✓ The Control of a Co-operative enterprise is not in the hands of capitalists who can corner the share capital and control the interest in any undertaking which would be a private undertaking.
- ✓ In co-operative Sector, the principle of "One man one Vote" is provided in the statute so as to ensure that the capital does not dominate the administration of co-operative Society.
- ✓ Any person can apply for the membership of the Society without any discrimination. The membership is open for all.
- ✓ As the Society is working on democratic principle and the office bearers of the Society will be functioning like a trustees for the better management of the society and there is no separate benefits to the executive committee members. Service is the main motto and the profit is not the main concern in co-operative societies.
- ✓ Co-operative Society is an association of members and certain percentage profits earned by the society, as decided in the meeting of the General body will be distributed in the form of dividend to the members.
- ✓ Irrespective of the shareholding, each member has only one vote in the decision-making in the General body meeting or at the time of election of the committee for management. The shares are not traded in

the stock exchange. The State Co-op Act also prescribes the maximum amount, which a member can hold as a share capital in any society. Under M.C.S. Act, 1960 as per Section 28 other than Government or other society shall not hold more than 1/5 of the total capital or interest in shares or exceeding Rs. 20,000/- which the State Government power to change by way of notification.

- ✓ The shareholders have to personally attend the meeting or for voting. They are not allowed to appoint proxies for attending the general body or for voting in the resolution to be passed.
- ✓ Every society has to contribute towards the education fund maintained and looked after by the district co-operative education Board as per the notification issued from time to time for educating the members or the office bearers of the Society.
- ✓ The funds generated or mobilized through the co-operative societies have to be deposited/ invested in the Co-operative Sector only (<https://www.wirc-icai.org/material/registration%20of%20societies>).

Principles:

- ✓ Voluntary And Open Membership
- ✓ Democratic Member Control
- ✓ Member Economic Participation
- ✓ Autonomy Member Control
- ✓ Concern For Community

Global Scenario Achievements:

- ✓ The cooperative movement brings together over 1 billion people (100 crores) around the world, covering 1.4 million (14 lakhs) cooperatives spread over 100 countries, providing employment to over 100 million (10 crores) people.
- ✓ In USA, there are 30,000 cooperatives with 100 million (10 crores) members operating through 73,000 outlets throughout US, where 30% of farmers' products in the US are marketed through 3,400 farmer owned cooperatives.
- ✓ In china, there are 80,000 cooperatives with 180 million (18 crore).
- ✓ India has the largest cooperative movement with 6,00,000 cooperative societies with 250 million (25crores) members (Siddanthi,2016).
- ✓ The key sectors focused by cooperatives across the globe are

Continent	Sectors
Europe	Agriculture, Consumer, Credit & Banking
America	Agriculture, Credit, Consumer utilities
Africa	Agriculture, credit & Banking, Housing, Dairy, Artisans
Asia-pacific	Agriculture, credit & Banking, Dairy, Fishery, Textiles, Health, artisans

(Source: Siddanthi, 2016)

- ✓ ICA Global studied 300 successful co-operatives and found reasons for success
 - Enlightened members list
 - Professionally qualified management
 - Ethical governance
- ✓ Total revenue of 300 global cooperatives was over 1 trillion USD (Rs.50 lakh crore).
- ✓ World largest banks are cooperatives (France, Holland and Japan).
- ✓ 28 from out of 300 global cooperatives are from Asia-pacific Japan-14, Austiralia-3, New Zealand-2, Korea-2, Singapore-21, china-1 and India-4 (IFFCO, AMUL, NAFED, Markfed, AP).
- ✓ World over, cooperatives have been existing in a market economy
 - Norway, 99% of milk production
 - Holland, 95% of Dutch flowers
 - Switzerland, 2nd largest cooperative employer
 - Israel, world's five largest producers of drip irrigation equipment
 - Malaysia, networking of cooperative schools
 - Australia. Music cooperatives
 - Thailand, eco-tourism
 - India, dairy and super cooperatives
 - China, depends heavily on rural economy through cooperatives

Opportunities:

- ✓ Cooperatives are the key to empowerment to "Rural poor", right from Birth of Baby in a cooperative hospital, the entire socio-economic fabric of the society is based on philosophy of cooperation even performing rituals of death.
- ✓ Cooperatives have tremendous role in bringing economic development in any economy
 - Dairy cooperatives (like Gujarat, Karnataka)
 - Irrigation cooperatives (like Maharashtra)

- Technology up gradation (Artisans, bio-fertilizers, agri. Tools bio-gas, etc.)
- Water users cooperatives societies (like Karnataka)

Major areas of Interventions:

- ✓ Cooperative credit
- ✓ Cooperative marketing
- ✓ Cooperative processing
- ✓ Cooperative storage
- ✓ Cooperative farming
- ✓ Consumer cooperatives
- ✓ Housing cooperatives
- ✓ Labour and construction cooperatives
- ✓ Fishermen cooperatives
- ✓ Rural electric cooperatives
- ✓ Cooperative hospitals
- ✓ Cooperative education institutions

Utility Co-Operatives:

- ✓ Such as water, electricity / telecommunication services to its members.

Power Crises:

- ✓ India 11th largest producer of electrical energy, while India is 6th consumer of electrical energy.
- ✓ In India, 40 crore people do not have access to electricity.
- ✓ The number of villages electrified now are 5,00,000 and around 1,00,000 villages are waiting for electrification.
- ✓ It is a good opportunity for cooperatives for achieving the goal of power generation (Siddanthi, 2016).

Solar energy co-operatives have their presence in USA, Germany, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

- Sydney energy cooperatives (Australia)
- Greater river energy cooperatives (USA)
- Mount pleasant solar cooperatives (USA)
- Wind cooperatives (USA, Germany, Netherland, Denmark)
- World's largest off shore wind farm through cooperatives with 1,00,000 members (Denmark)

Challenges Before Co-Operative Movement in Youth Participation:

The following are the challenges before Co-operation

- ✓ Strengthening of capital base
- ✓ Sound financial management
- ✓ Creating awareness
- ✓ Ethical leadership
- ✓ Democratic functioning
- ✓ Political intervention
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Effective governance
- ✓ Professional management
- ✓ Qualitative human resources
- ✓ Systems and procedures
- ✓ Business diversification
- ✓ Training and audit (Siddanthi, 2016).

The co-operative movement in India faces a big challenge to galvanise the youth so as to usher in new leadership which can give a real momentum to the growth of the cooperative movement in the country (Sanjay Kumar Verma, 2016). The youth can play an important role in strengthening the cooperative movement in the following ways;

Developing Creative Skills: The youth can provide creative skills for the growth of co-operative organization, as they are young and dynamic, burning with new ideas. A cooperative provides ideal training ground to develop the creativity of youth. Starting a cooperative, working in it and developing socio-economic activities all require creativity

Innovation: Youth are innovative creatures. They like to experiment, and they do not like fixed ideas. While working in a co-operative, they can work for the welfare of the markets, community responsibility, and market dynamics, which all require innovation. So youth through their innovation develop the functional capabilities of a cooperative.

Democratic Participation: Co-operatives are purely democratic organizations where everyone is free to contribute in his/her unique manner. Youth can play an important role in strengthening equality norms of a cooperative through non-discriminatory nature of a cooperative, if they are well sensitized to join a co-operative (Sanjay Kumar Verma, 2016).

Basic Values:

- ✓ Self values
- ✓ Self-responsibility
- ✓ Democracy
- ✓ Equality, equity and solidarity

Role of Youths in Co-Operatives:

- ✓ The importance of students involvement in cooperatives was emphasized by the co-operatives planning committee in 1945.
- ✓ In order to educate youth in cooperatives, several suggestions were made from time to time to state governments, such as
 - Teaching of co-operation may be introduced in the primary and secondary schools through simple lessons in the social study books by NCERT.
 - Co-operation should be introduced as an optional subject in BA (economics), B.Com courses, agricultural courses, rural development courses, micro- credit, self-help groups, environmental science courses etc. A master degree in cooperation and allied subjects be introduced in all universities with proper placement support in all f cooperatives organizations.
 - Co-operative stores, canteens, credit societies, etc., be organized in schools, colleges and universities to give practical emphasis to the field of cooperation.
 - Co-operation should be included as a subject in public service commission examination.

In order to popularize the subject of cooperation among university students, a scheme for the organization of debating and essay contests was introduced by NCCT, New Delhi in 1960, has become a very popular event among the universities, all over the country. A large number of universities participate with well prepared teams to support and oppose the motion.

- Along with debating competition, a symposium on cooperation is also organized since 1971 by NCCT, New Delhi. The debates essays competitions and symposia motivated the youths to think about cooperation as a concept and job oriented subject. The debates and symposia are now organized both in Hindi and English at all India level.
- The cooperatives stores should be organized in the college and universities with membership of both students and staff. Their participation in stores will also provide sense of fellowship, mutual aid and democratic management besides providing stationery, books etc., at reasonable price. In Japan, all the universities, numbering more than HUNDRED, have such stores, where such stores import books, equipment and other items, being sold to students/members at reasonable price. The price difference between cooperative stores and private shops in Japan ranging between 30 to 40 percent.
- In the present condition in India, where cost of education is consistently rising, organization of cooperative stores in educational institution of cooperative store in educational institutions should be launched as a movement through the country (Siddanthi, 2016).

Brand Building and Role of Social Media:

Effective communication strategy for popularizing cooperative model amongst the youth can build up a 'cooperative youth brand' which can strengthen the identity of the cooperative sector. The cooperative brand is based on the uniqueness of cooperative organizations, its distinctive advantage, and its wider community base. If youth linkages are established with this brand, then this brand can easily advocate that cooperatives are best suited for youth, and if the youth have a future, then it lies in cooperatives (Sanjay Kumar Verma, 2016).

Conclusion:

The wheels of co-operative movement can be strengthened only by active involvement of youth in the day today functioning of cooperatives throughout the country, being built in as part of curriculum. The integration and development of any country is possible through cooperative model, for which youths should take lead in strengthening the co-operative process (Siddanthi, 2016).

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