

24th International Congress of CIRIEC

Napoli Italia 30 settembre - 2 ottobre 2002

THE FUNCTION OF THE EDUCATION IN THE COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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Workshop 2 – Education and Training

INTRODUCTION

Establishing a cooperative is an economic enterprise that requires the bringing together of material and moral strength. The economic goal of the cooperative system is to meet people's needs to obtain the maximum economic benefit from scarce economic resources. By establishing a cooperative, people have the opportunity to attain economic goals that would otherwise require a long time or would be completely impossible to attain.

As regards the essence of the cooperative system, it is a movement of cooperation and mutual support. In this sense the cooperative movement is a self-help movement; as for the cooperative system, it is a self-help mechanism and technique.

Being a self-help movement the cooperative system also has the characteristic of being a tool for social policy. Therefore the cooperative system has a role in serving the state's social aims and social policy.

Essentially, cooperative system activities have the quality of an economic enterprise. Every cooperative in some sense is an economic enterprise with an economic goal.

From the point of view of its characteristics and functions, the cooperative movement is closely connected to education. The role of education in the development and success of the cooperative system movement constitutes the subject of this paper.

I - ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESS IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COOPERATIVE SYSTEM

As a self-help movement, there are a number of prerequisites for success in the cooperative system. Some of these prerequisites are explained below.

1) A Developed Cooperation Culture

The cooperative movement is a self-help movement. It is a movement of those with common needs who meet them through helping one another, mutual support and joint action. Profit is not the main goal in the cooperative system. The goal is to meet common needs in a shorter period of time and in a more suitable manner through combining opportunities and efforts.

The cooperative movement is one which requires a culture of coming together, doing work together, combining economic strength and working together. In this sense the cooperative system movement is an economic mutual support movement with a social quality; it is a socio-economic movement of mutual support. In this sense establishing

a cooperative in the end creates a culture of socio-economic mutual support and mutual assistance. An absolute pre-requisite for the birth and development of the cooperative movement in this sense the existence, in society of a culture, of socio-economic mutual support within the fabric of national culture. This kind of cultural basis creates a suitable milieu for the development of the cooperative movement.

Another condition for the development of the cooperative movement within such a cultural milieu is explaining the importance of establishing cooperatives, making society aware in this sense and obtaining the necessary support for the established cooperatives. In this context it is necessary to educate and inform people concerning the importance of establishing cooperatives and the benefits that will be attained. In this way the importance of establishing cooperatives will be made their own and will be made comprehensible. That is, a cooperative culture will be produced through education.

2) A Modern Business Management System

Every cooperation Activity is, in one sense, a business activity. It is in this regard that one of the cooperative movement's pre-requisites is the creation of a business management activity based on the most advanced knowledge and techniques of business management and techniques. This activity, being based on the most advanced business administration knowledge and techniques, has the chance to be successful and attain its goals while it is being conducted.

Cooperative enterprises, like all enterprises, must carry out and develop their activities within global economic conditions.

3) Continuous Development and Education

Globalization, as a movement which is rapidly transforming the world into a single market, continues in its development. Globalization brings with its global competition. Just as globalization has created new possibilities and opportunities, humanity is also left face to face with new problems and needs.

Globalization as a fact of continuous changes and development has become permanent. This continuous changes and developments have created the need for continuous education and innovation.

Cooperative enterprises are required to keep pace with continuous changes and developments. The pre-requisite for keeping pace with this is continuing education, research and development. Continuous innovation and education in this sense is an important and essential need for the cooperative system.

A cooperative which does not keep pace with change nor values continuous education to constantly develop its human resources has no chance for success in its enterprises.

II - REQUIREMENTS FOR COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MODERN ECONOMY

1) Awareness of the Cooperative System

Cooperatives get their strength primarily from the conscious support of their founders and partners. Therefore the development of cooperative culture gains importance in this context. Under the condition of increasing global competition, the cooperative system's greatest power of support is the knowledgable of cooperative partners.

The cooperative system will succeed to the degree that its members comprehend the importance of establishing cooperatives and the meaning of the cooperative system.

By establishing cooperative, members have the opportunity to obtain their needs under more economic and suitable conditions as well as to understand the advantages of economic mutual assistance and mutual support.

2) A Successful Business Management Activity

Cooperative enterprises conduct their activities under competitive market conditions in an environment of competition. Under these conditions, the material and moral satisfaction that the cooperative system obtains for its partners from its work plays an important role in the cooperative enterprise's success.

The cooperative activities will continue to have the support of its partners to the degree that the economic benefits that the members expected from establishing a cooperative. There is a direct connection between the increasing support, in contributions and continuity of the cooperative partners and the feeling of material and moral satisfaction.

In this context the successful administration of cooperative enterprises gains importance, because the success of the cooperative system is linked to success in administration.

Human resources play primary role in the success of the cooperative system. Managing and developing human resources requires having and applying a successful human resources management policy. In this context continuous education and innovation are extremely important.

3) A Sustainable Cooperation Policy

In order to the cooperative activities to be sustainable and continuous, it is also necessary for these activities to be more poverfull.

A sustainable cooperative movement must be based on the characteristics above. That is, cooperatives must have a system and practice of modern management. But this is not enough.

It is imperative that the need for establishing cooperatives and the economic and moral benefits to be gained from establishing cooperatives be seen in a concrete fashion in the members of cooperative activities.

Thus, the greatest need in this context is the need for education in the cooperative system. Therefore, an absolute requirement for the cooperatives to be successful and to be sustainable is the cooperation education.

Education will supply the cooperation knowledge needed for a sustainable cooperative system, the use of its resources for maximum benefit and to make possible its development.

III - THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE SYSTEM

We have made it clear that education is an absolute requirement for the activity of a successful, sustainable cooperative system. Education is not only important from the aspect that it is one of principles of the international cooperative system; education is far more important from the point of view of the benefits that it will secure in the development of the cooperatives.

1) Developing of A Cooperative Culture (Education for Members and Future Members)

A culture of mutual economic assistance and support is found to certain degree in all societies. This sentiment has shown a decrease in proportion with industrialization and urbanization, since urbanization in modern industrial societies, that is, the culture of industrial society has a strongly individualistic character. On the other hand, in industrialized societies at present social security is accepted as a public duty and citizens by paying taxes place the responsibilities in this area on the state. Where the state has prepared an organizational infrastructure in the area of economic and social security and people in society have been born and raised within such a structure,

people may not feel a great need for another form of economic mutual support and assistance.

However, in developing societies and predominantly agricultural societies the culture of social assistance and mutual support is more developed and stronger. The needs and socio-economic conditions increase people's need for such mutual support and make it necessary.

This does not mean that the codes for social assistance and mutual support are strongly present, nor that a cooperative system will develop on its own in society because this assistance and mutual support can appear in many forms other than cooperatives.

The cooperative system is a technique of social economic assistance and mutual support with specific principles and a specific mission. For this reason this technique must be explained, presented and taught to the masses. Therefore, giving education on the cooperative system must be obligatory.

Starting with education on the cooperative system in primary school, it is necessary to present the principles both theoretically and practically to people and to develop a culture and awareness of the cooperative system.

Education on the cooperative system will remove the dust on the culture of socio-economic mutual assistance and assist in this mutual assistance taking the form of the cooperative system. Education on the cooperative system is a necessity for societies at every level of cooperative development.

With this education people can begin an economic assistance and mutual support movement in the form of a cooperative based on their common needs; a cooperative formed in this way provides strength and support.

The education of members and candidates for membership increases the motivation of a successful cooperative movement, develops cooperative ventures and spreads the support and aid to existing cooperatives. This can be considered a pre-requisite for the strengthening of this cooperative system and establishing a conscious cooperative system. It should be understood that a structure of educated cooperative members is the cooperative movement's greatest driving force.

2) From the Aspect of Cooperative Enterprises

Education is a basic requirement for the success of cooperative enterprises and their successes to be continued.

Within the conditions of a globalizing market, constant change is a reality. Constant change and increasing competition make it necessary for cooperatives to gain knowledge and conduct research and development in this field, and/or continuously benefit from research and development activities. And this means continuous education in the cooperatives and for the cooperatives.

In particular, under conditions of increasing competition the development of human resources in cooperatives becomes important and urgent. Therefore these days, human resources are accepted and evaluated as human capital in cooperative ventures.

Human capital is a different capital from other financial sources and has the characteristic of not always being replaceable. Enriching, developing and strengthening human resources is a great competitive strength under market conditions and gains productivity. Therefore, cooperatives must, at all levels and continuously, educate their employees.

Today the subject is considered to be important from the aspect of the cooperative enterprises trained carrying out their social responsibilities. Human resources must be according to the needs of the cooperatives and its sector. Therefore, transferring or finding and employing experienced people will not be able to meet the needs of the coops all the time. Developing the firm's culture will ensure the workers' productivity and continuous education is needed to cope with issues such as alienation.

IV - THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE SYSTEM IN THE CONTEXT OF TURKISH COOPERATIVES

1) From the Aspect of Developing Awareness of the Cooperative System

Turkish culture has strong cultural norms from the respect of social assistance and mutual support. Beginning with Ahi System in Selcuk Times, various techniques and institutions have been founded for social support and assistance.

Despite having a rich tradition of support and assistance, it is difficult to say that it has been possible to be able to develop a cooperative system in our country. Various factors can be given to explain this result:

(i) First of all, while the cooperative movement is a self-help and movement, cooperation movement in our country has a movement from top to bottom a semi-state movement because the state and statesmen were the leaders of the cooperative system in the country and obtained support for it. But, concerning the need and awareness for establishing a cooperative system, insufficient effort was shown for the necessary education and information and for the development of a cooperative system culture in the modern sense.

In our country the cooperative movement was perceived as a movement coming from the West. In its founding years intellectuals, statesmen and social leaders were the leaders of the cooperative system. The cooperative system in our country was developed from top to bottom as an official movement. Without society feeling the need for a cooperative system, it was presented to them as an opportunity. The state provided great support to the cooperative movement. This exaggerated degree of state support, which in the beginning was correct, was the reason for the cooperative movement being perceived as a movement whose basic aim was to procure aid from the state.

Because sufficient effort was not spent on developing a cooperative system culture and the necessary education was not provided, members of cooperatives did not sufficiently perceive the necessities and obligations for establishing a cooperative.

This situation was the cause of numerous abuses and created those who lived off cooperatives and cooperative “bosses.” On the other hand, the insufficiency of cooperative system education paved the way for numerous issues in the area of democratic management and participation in cooperatives.

2) From the Aspect of the Development of Cooperative Activities

The need for education is continuous in the workings of the cooperative system. The education of both the cooperative partners, cooperative managers, and employees, is required for a successful cooperatives in a continually changing market.

3) From the Aspect of Social Policy

The Need of Education for Social Policy.

Understanding the importance of establishing cooperatives and adopting the cooperative system as movement for economic assistance and mutual support serves the social policy of the state. In this sense, development of a cooperative culture in the development of self-help movements for encouragement, education is a must.

In particular, in Turkey, with its issues of income distribution and unresolved economic problems, it is an absolute necessity for the state from the point of view of social policy to support the development of self-help movements. This is because, in Turkey with its inadequate social security infrastructure, the cooperative system movement will increase and strengthen socio-economic assistance.

Thanks to the cooperative system people have the opportunity to take greater advantage of scarce resources and the goods and services produced in society. Thus the need for the state to increase the resources dedicated to this area will be avoided.

It only remains to say that the Constitution gives the obligation and duty to take measures to develop the cooperative system to the state (Constitution, Article 171). But all of these will only be possible with education that introduces the cooperative system to the people and makes it their own, and will bring cooperation into a cultural value. The cooperative system's activities have the potential to be successful to the degree that education which includes the workers in cooperatives is continued.

CONCLUSION

A sustainable cooperative movement can appear in a social milieu which has developed a cooperative system culture. Education starting from an early age which provides cooperative system awareness and culture makes it possible to win the next generation.

In a globalizing world socio-economic change continues rapidly. To keep pace with this change continuous education is a necessity. The need for education must be constantly met.

“Education from the cradle to the grave” is a Turkish proverb. Education must be continuous and at all levels. Education is needed to continually inform and make aware cooperative members, managers and workers.

And in the cooperative system, as in other fields, education at every level is a need as important as water and bread brought about by constant change in globalizing competitive markets. The pre-requisite for success in the cooperative system is well-organized, programmed and continuous education.