Exploring Education for Co-operation:
Applying Rochdale to the Social Economy

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Goals

• Explore how education is approached in the social economy and co-ops more specifically
• Debate the approach, pedagogies and whether communitarian values are encouraged through education
• Connect current educational practices in co-ops and the broader social economy to that of the Rochdale Pioneers (co-operative movement founders)
• Engage you in a discussion about an education framework for the social economy
Educating Co-operators: the Canadian context

Réseau de recherche pour mesurer la DIFFÉRENCE COOPÉRATIVE

Measuring the Co-operative Difference
RESEARCH NETWORK

Erin Hancock, Research Network Member
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Research questions:
- What type of education is offered to the Canadian co-operative business community (all stakeholders from members to board directors)?
- Which stakeholder group is most often targeted by these initiatives?
- Do co-operatives operating in certain sectors of the economy tend to offer more educational initiatives than co-operatives operating in other economic sectors?
- How is information delivered?

Scan of educational and training initiatives across Canada by co-ops and/or for co-ops
5th principle of co-operation

• “Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.”

- The International Co-operative Alliance
Overview of findings

• 180 initiatives found
• Across all economic sectors
• Delivered by primary, second tier and third tier co-ops as well as consulting bodies and universities
• Delivery methods ranged from online static resources to in-person courses
• Initiatives targeted staff, management, directors, members, developers and the public
• Topics included co-op topics as well as technical topics
### Who offers these initiatives?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of co-op</th>
<th># of initiatives</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associations and federations</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-stakeholder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economic sector of the co-op offering the initiative

- Multisector, not otherwise specified: 48%
- Financial: 24%
- Housing: 9%
- Agriculture: 9%
- Consumer goods: 10%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery system</th>
<th># of times used</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminars/workshops</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-instruction</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences/symposium</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinars/teleconferences</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retreats/camps</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters/mailings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>209</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequency of educational materials and tools used in initiatives

- Written materials: 55%
- Websites and online forums: 18%
- Instructional packages: 13%
- Display, promotional materials: 7%
- Videos: 5%
- Databases: 2%
Frequency of the co-op topics addressed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-op management and leadership (managers)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op start-up and development</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op identity and philosophy (co-op 101)</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op and community involvement</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op financial management and financial literacy</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op model and stakeholders' roles and responsibility</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op governance and leadership (board of directors)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequency of technical topics addressed

- Sector knowledge and management and leadership: 35%
- Business general: 21%
- Financial management and financial literacy: 12%
- Enterprise development/marketing: 11%
- Governance and leadership: 10%
- Communication and technology: 8%
- Other: 3%
What does this tell us about the education landscape for Canadian co-operatives?

- Many co-operatives invest in education across the various member structures and economic sectors.
- Executives/managers and boards are most targeted for education.
- Some audiences are targeted infrequently (policy makers, the public and youth).
- Co-operatives educate mainly from a co-op perspective (embodying the model’s unique attributes within education and not simply educating from a technical or industry perspective).
- Federations/associations are critical actors in educating.
Needing more exploration

• The effectiveness of the education initiatives (the methods used, any effect on co-op/business performance, affinity/loyalty for the co-operative, etc.)
• Uptake and reach of these initiatives
Contributors

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• Provincial co-op associations

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