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BOOK REVIEW

**THE COOPERATIVE SOCIETY. THE NEXT STAGE OF HUMAN HISTORY.
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ABSTRACT

The book on cooperative society, the next stage of human history by Nadeau, E.G and Nadeau L as published by the Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data is generally intending to describe how human history is related to cooperatives and hence forming the cooperative society. The book hypothesises that cooperatives are related to human history transition. This book is wealth for readers as it is explaining the transition of cooperatives as related to the changes or transition of human history. Moreover, the book has pointed out the possible drivers of cooperative transition as related to human history, such drivers include change of political ideology as well as environmental related factors, though the authors have ignored the role of technology in influencing cooperative transitions. Moreover, the authors are emphasising the need for the increased number of memberships in cooperatives as a pillar to cooperative transition and advancement.

KEY WORDS: Cooperative, Cooperation, Society, Human history, Cooperative Transition.

Paper Type: Book Review

Type of Review: Peer Review

1. SYNOPSIS OF THE BOOK

The authors of the book have treated chapter one as hypothesis whereas it hypothesises the cooperative society and stages of human history. In this introductory chapter the authors are emphasising that human beings have always been cooperated with purpose of winning their daily bread. This definition complements the definition by ILO (2002) that it is "an autonomous association of people united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through jointly-

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owned and democratically-controlled enterprises. The authors moreover, describe that through the cooperation process it is when the society form the so called Cooperative Society (ies). Through the cooperative society community is capable of shaping the society. Additionally the authors have pointed that through the process of corporation they also face relationship conflicts. The authors in this chapter, furthermore, define the cooperative society as a potential new stage of human history which is characterised by economic and political democracy, cooperative international relations and symbolic relationship with nature. The authors are also describing that always cooperative societies are on transition which make them change from time to time. The chapter moreover, points out that there are stages of human history where cooperation among societies has always being passing through. These stages include; hunting and gathering, simple agriculture and diversified economic activity and the stage of cooperative society.

In chapter two the authors have explained about the cooperative society transition measurements. At this point the emphasis is to measure the progress and lack of progress which is measured and evaluated for the cooperative society growth or no growth. The authors have evaluated seven measures which represent economic, political, social and environmental components of a transition for the cooperative society. These measures include: Growth or decline of a cooperative business; Increasing or decreasing of economic power of large, for-profit business; Increasing or decreasing inequality in household income and wealth; Greater or fewer deaths from domestic and international conflicts; more or fewer people living in democratic countries; improving or deteriorating environmental conditions. These are the measures associated with cooperative society transition as each may influence the transition separately of in one way or another more than one measures may influence that cooperative transition.

Chapter three of the book is about the recommendations and observations: becoming more cooperative society. In this chapter the authors are pointing out that human being/people shape the world and act strategically to improve their living performance basing on the measures described in chapter two. In life always a society may tend to take action to reinforce the positive trends of transition and to encounter the negative ones. The emphasis on the recommendations made by the authors is to focus on changes to be made by 2030 which is the target date for both the Paris Accord on Climate Change and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The authors have portrayed that the number of cooperatives in the World is approaching to 3 million with more than 2 billion cooperative members (pp22) out of 7.9 people of the World population. This tells us that about 25% of the World's population is in the World of co-operators, this is not a number to ignore to be considered in the World economy. By thinking of the transition of cooperatives in terms of number of members one can guess that there are possibilities for the number of cooperative members to increase by 2030.

Furthermore, it is narrated that the increasing number of cooperative members will depend on the available opportunities like: improve measurement of cooperatives and cooperative performance; improve the legal and regulatory environment for cooperatives; strengthen community level, national and international support for cooperatives; improve cooperative development and financial assistance

and stability; and develop targeted strategies for cooperative sectors, countries and job-creation opportunities. This chapter in general gives out recommendations and concluding remarks. It further emphasises that the expansion of cooperative business like doubling of membership will not just happen. It has to be planned, funded, implemented, evaluated and revised between now and 2030. For this to happen the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and others in the cooperative community must take the lead development role.

2. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE OVERALL CONTRIBUTION

The book on Cooperative Society as a human history contains three chapters which are fed up with critical explanations on the history human life as well as the history of cooperatives as part and parcel of human life including the evolution of human line in accordance to cooperative transitions. The book detailed that the cooperative always undergo transitions as human life also undergoes transitions over a period of time. This book is valuable and timely for it entailed to describe how cooperative transits with the transition of the society life style as well as its environmental settings. These changes may include the changes of community life of the old life style as well as the tradition cooperatives into modern cooperatives. Moreover, it is critically highlighted that the transition and changes of the cooperatives over a period of time are influenced by factors such as the political ideological changes, population growth and urbanisation as well as political economy power relation dynamics. Furthermore, in one way or another the authors admit that cooperative transition as a process at one point must or shall have to pass through; society instability which can make them survive strong or experience conflicts which may be caused by conflict of ideas on the acceptance of the changes and the modes of changes. Conversely, the authors have not pointed out that the technological changes and advancement as well as epidemiological transitions they may also an immense role for cooperatives transitions, as pointed out by Mgema and Komba (2020) on the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the performance of co-operative societies in Tanzania.

Likewise strength of the book is that all over the chapters on the cooperative transition and human life development the authors have admitted and recognised the contribution, role and the importance of the cooperatives and their transition process to mitigate climate changes effects as well as meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030. This idea is well supported by Bamanyisa *et al.* (2021) who pointed out on the role of co-operatives' activities in reducing emission and enhancing carbon sinks in Moshi and Urambo Districts, the authors sought to understand how the co-operatives play a role in reducing emissions and increasing carbon stocks in different pools in the study areas. This is in line with what was admitted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2021) who pointed out that Agricultural cooperative in different parts of the world can help to enable members to manage climate risks and adapt to climate change. By adhering to environmental standards and promoting local production and marketing as opposed to long distance transport, consumer and producer cooperatives can help to limit greenhouse gas emissions. The large size of their membership places cooperatives in a unique position to raise member awareness about the importance of reducing their carbon footprints and to lobby governments to significantly reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. This is also supported by

ICA (2014) which reported that Co-operatives have long fostered inclusive and sustainable approaches to economic and social development at the local level. It is in keeping with this focus that co-operatives are expanding their development efforts creatively, into areas such as environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality, as communities around the world are struggling to adapt to climate change and strengthen their resilience against its impacts. Authors in this book have also admitted the importance of the improved the legal and regulatory environment as well as cooperative performance for cooperatives development which may influence cooperative transition. This is very debatable today as scholars argue on the contributing role of the legal frameworks in the advancement of the cooperatives. This argument is complementing the argument by Garnevska, *et al.*, (2011) who pointed out that a stable legal environment; a dedicated initiator and leader; government financial and technical support; farmer understanding and participation of cooperative activities and appropriate external support from professional NGOs were the key factors for the successful development of farmer cooperatives in Northwest of China.

3. CONCLUSION

In cooperatives to day among the issues emerging is the expansion and modernisation of cooperatives at all levels. This reviewed book has a notation that cooperatives and human life are inseparable, means changes in one may have influence on the change of the other side. Moreover, in this book authors have expanded and promoted the contribution of cooperatives into the growth of the World economy contribution into job creation as well as establishment of cooperatives business at the national, regional and international levels. This book is of exemplary to readers especially those interested in understanding human life versus cooperatives and cooperative development as well as evolutions and transitions of cooperative models.

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