

CHAPTER 7 : SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides the summary and conclusion of the study on the training and education for the Cooperative Movement with special reference to the Cooperative College of Malaysia. Some recommendations are also given to improve the training and education activities conducted by the three organizations.

7.1 SUMMARY

The Cooperative Movement began in 1922 with the introduction of credit cooperatives into the country by the British. Today however cooperatives are multipurpose in nature, involved in all types of activities. Credit cooperative however remain the backbone of the movement. As at the end of 1996 there were 3,735 cooperatives in the country with 4.2 million members, share capital of RM 2.8 billion and RM 12.2 billion in assets.

Since its inception, three main organizations were officially responsible to the growth and the development of the cooperatives namely, CDD (1992), CCM (1956) and ANGKASA (1972). Besides the

other roles and functions, except for CCM, the three organizations were also responsible in promoting and conducting training and education activities for the cooperative movement.

This study have identified the roles and the functions of the three organizations in undertaking the training and education activities for the cooperative movement. It cannot be denied that their efforts and responsibilities towards the cooperative movement have shown some the achievements in dissemination of cooperative knowledge and information. However, it also reveals a number of weakness and deficiencies of the three organizations in promoting and conducting this activity.

7.2 FINDINGS

A cooperative is a socio-economic organization with an objective to improve the sosio-economic well being of its members. Cooperatives provides among others stress the importance of training and education for members, board members and cooperative employees. The root of the problem faced by cooperatives today is inadequate training and education activities. Thus there is a need for greater integration among and between the three organizations and the cooperatives themselves to overcome this problem.

Inadequate cooperative knowledge, in theory and practice among the members, board members, committee members and the cooperative employees. The statement above is supported by the survey, "Public Perception and Images of Cooperative in Malaysia", (as mention in chapter 6, page 120) which shows that the cooperators and the public were still ignorant of the cooperative values and the benefit of cooperation. However, the members of the public appear to have a fairly positive image of the cooperative movement in Malaysia.

There seems to be lacking and inadequate publication on the cooperative matters. The cooperators and the public do not get much information regarding the cooperative movement and the cooperative college.

There is a lack of integration and collaboration between the three organizations in carrying out their responsibility in providing training and education activities for the cooperative movement. Although several attempts and efforts were made regarding this matter such as at the Seminar Cooperative Training Policy and Standards (1985), The Langkawi Seminar (1990), the Melaka Declaration (1993). There is still poor coordination among and between the three organizations in organizing and conducting this activity.

Lack of dynamic and qualified and dedicated cooperative leaders. There is an obvious absence of dynamic and qualified leadership in the

decision making process and management of the cooperatives. There is a lack of commitment on the part of the cooperatives in conducting the training and education activity for themselves. CDD has since 1987 been advising all cooperatives to set up their own Member's Education Committee. In addition to that, CDD also suggested that the cooperative should also create the Member's Education Fund, an annual allocation for this activity from their profits. However, till today not many cooperatives have done it.

The study also show that there is no proper evaluation made by the three bodies after conducting the courses neither there are any follow up to measure the changes that the cooperators have done after attending the training program except for CCM. Even that CCM should improved on the evaluation they did and action should be taken to improve the problem as suggested.

The roles and functions emphasized by the three organizations regarding the training and education activities are mainly confined to organizing and conducting courses, seminars and workshops for the cooperatives whereas the other areas in promoting and dissemination the cooperatives knowledge and information such as research, publication, audio-visual production, publicity of the cooperatives concepts and practices are still very poor and inadequate.

The findings of the survey, "Public Perception and Images of Cooperatives in Malaysia",¹ show that the cooperatives (members, board members, committee members and cooperative employees) and the public are still ignorant of the cooperative values and the benefit of cooperation. In general, the public appear to have a fairly positive image of the cooperatives and very little knowledge of the cooperative movement. However they did not get much information about the cooperative principles, concepts and practices. This indicate that there are still lacking and inadequate write up and literature for the cooperatives and not enough publicity carried out by the three bodies in spreading the cooperative knowledge and information.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study and the preceding findings, several recommendations can be made to improve the training and education activity conducted by the three organizations.

1. Restructuring the role and the functions of the three organizations. Restructuring the roles and functions of the three bodies - there need a proper policy to reorganize the role and function of the three bodies so

¹ Susan Tho Lai Mooi and Sushila Devi, Public Perception and Images of Cooperatives in Malaysia, The World of Cooperatives Enterprise, Plunkett Foundation, London, 1997, pg. 18

as to avoid duplication in carrying out the duties. More closer collaboration and frequent meetings to ensure the enforcement of the policy was implemented and followed. There should be an 'enforcement' committee with the representative from the three bodies, who will be responsible to monitor the agreement or policy that was made at any meeting or seminars.

In addition to the above, it is also recommended a 'standard' training manual and training packages to be used by the three organizations. In order to streamline the curriculum and the subject matter in the training programs conducted by the three bodies, a standard training manual and training packages should be prepared by the three bodies and used during the training session. This can help to reduce duplication and also confusion among the participants attending the training programs whether it was conducted by any of the three bodies.

2. Concerted efforts by CDD, CCM and ANGKASA

To achieve the objective of promoting cooperative values and practices through the cooperative training and education activities for the Cooperative Movement, there has to be a concerted and deliberate effort by various organizations involved in the cooperative movement. The

three main players are the Cooperative Development Department (CDD), the Cooperative College of Malaysia (CCM) and the cooperative apex organization (ANGKASA).

a. The Cooperative Development Department (CDD)

The CDD which is also the registrar of cooperatives has the responsibility and power to provide some legislative provisions in the Cooperative Act and the cooperative by laws regarding the training and education requirements for the cooperators. There should be a clause in the act to enforce compulsory cooperative education to all the members and board members and they must have the minimum and basic cooperative knowledge as the prerequisite requirement to apply for the cooperative membership or to be elected as the board members. Other recommendation includes :-

- * Encourage cooperatives to have their own training and education programs by setting up their own training and education committee.
- * Identify the training needs of cooperatives and recommend the relevant training programs to CCM.
- * Provide pre-cooperative training and education to public especially to the potential cooperators.

The National Cooperative Organization of Malaysia (ANGKASA)

The role of ANGKASA in servicing the cooperative movement in the fields of member education, training, women's cooperative, school cooperatives, etc. should be continued.

However as the apex body of cooperatives (ANGKASA) has an important role to play in ensuring the effectiveness of the cooperative movement. Due of its influence in the cooperative structure, ANGKASA has the opportunity to assess the available resources in the cooperative movement and organize them in the best manner which would bring about efficiency and effectiveness of the cooperative programs. It is recommended that "an action committee" which comprises of the representatives from all cooperatives is established within ANGKASA to formulate a master plan for the enhancing the training and education activities for the entire movement. This committee should monitor the implementation of the programs at all levels and provide organizational and even financial support for the training and education activities.

Apart from that ANGKASA as the apex organization for the movement should planned to serve the movement in a more prominent way such as being the representative of the cooperative movement within

the country and internationally on matters regarding the cooperative growth and development. ANGKASA can do it through the following :-

- * by strengthening the membership of ANGKASA in order to reflect a growing movement. ANGKASA should provide a data base information regarding the cooperative in Malaysia such as membership, asset, shares, activities, address etc.
- * Full utilization of the State-level Liaison Committees and the Functional Committee of ANGKASA both the national organization and the cooperative within the state.
- * Collaborate with international cooperative organizations for training of local cooperators and trainers through the conduct of seminars, courses, study visits, workshop, exchange programs etc.

c. Cooperative College of Malaysia

The Cooperative College of Malaysia being the one and only training institution for the cooperative movement should shoulder the bulk of the responsibility regarding the training and the education activities for the cooperative movement. The College has the expertise and the facilities to organize and conduct training programs for the cooperative

movement alongside with the CDD, ANGKASA and the cooperatives societies. Some recommendation that can be made are :-

1. Since CCM was responsible for providing training in advance course, CCM should undertake the training of the trainers/officers from CDD and ANGKASA and also for the cooperative employees. Such courses are as follows:-

* In-service training - It was designed to upgrade the skill, talent and know-how of all grades of employees. Such training would not only enhance the performance of the employees in the organization but would also help to prepare them to take an additional and bigger responsibility and pave the way for career development. All in-service training should include a lesson on cooperative subjects apart from other subject matter and the such education should be a continuous process.

* Field Training - field visits and training designed to enable the new recruits to sense the pulse such as the feeling, aspirations and needs of the cooperative members.

* Attachment training -training by attachment to established and effective cooperative and such training should be short.

* Training through correspondence courses - CCM should explore the possibility of conducting corresponding courses for the cooperative employees.

* Distance learning through the use of mass media - Again CCM should look into this area to see the possibility of conducting training program in such manner. CCM should make extensive use of radio, television and newspaper as an effective means of training and education for the cooperatives.

* IT Technology - In taking advantage of the advances made in information technology, have provide another alternative way of learning for the cooperatives. Thus the Cooperative College should introduce this approach as another teaching aids so as to overcome the problems of cooperators who were unable to attend the training programs at the cooperative college.

The different methods of the IT technology that can be used in running the cooperative training programs and also to disseminate the cooperative knowledge and information are like using the

home-page, the e-mail, the internet and video conferencing.

Taking as an example, ITM Shah Alam has begun using the video conferencing to supplement face-face teaching in the remote sites in Jengka(Pahang), Dųngun, (Trengganu) and in Kuching, Sarawak. A similar system is being used at University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, between its campuses in Lembah Pantai, Kuala Lumpur and Nilam Puri, Kelantan and Cheras in Kuala Lumpur.

* Refresher courses - to keep officers and trainers abreast with the latest development on cooperative matters such law, management and computer, such courses could be a great help to them.

Professionalism in Cooperative Management

It was acknowledge that there is a need for the professionalism in the cooperative Management. However, we must realize that such professionalism must be within the framework of the cooperative philosophy. Due to the very nature of the movement - the people and service-oriented - it demands that all who are employed in these organization understand the philosophy and the purpose of cooperation and the modus operandi of the cooperative societies. Thus a short

training for all recruits to cooperative service becomes a pre-requisite. CCM should look into this area.

3. Training for the Cooperative Employee

The economic growth and development of the cooperative dependent on the effectiveness and efficiency of the cooperative employee who require professional management. To employ professional managers trained in the institution of higher learning without any experience in the cooperative organization or without any understanding of the cooperative philosophy would be counter productive. The basic concept of cooperative is that they are mass based movement with service to the members and the community in which they function as their primary objective rather than profit as would be in the case of the private enterprise.

4. Staff Development

Cooperative should design a comprehensive training and education program for the professional advancement of the cooperative personnel. A merit system may also be adopted to support the personnel development program. Promotion avenues for the employees who have

undergone cooperative training and education should be seriously considered and outlined.

5. Training the trainers

In order to train the cooperatives; members, board members, committee members, it is most important to train the trainer before they can undertake and perform their duty. The trainer should be given the right exposure and training whether locally or overseas, given more opportunity to participate in high level seminars and workshops designed to act as avenues for exchange of ideas. Add to it exposure through study tours and exchange programs too should form part of the training.

Other aspects of training for the trainers, besides the cooperatives values, cooperative concepts and the management theories, the trainers should also be training in the English language. English is necessary as the cooperative movement is an international movement and officers/trainers also conduct training in English for the international program where the participants come from various countries. The trainers too are usually send overseas for further study as well as to attend international seminars and meetings.

Trainers should also be trained on methodology and techniques of adult education because the majority of the cooperative members except

for the school cooperatives are adult learners. The adult learner's expectation of a learning process will be partly based upon his experiences at the school level and the working level. The combination of the two experiences will definitely influence the view of the learner.

Based upon these experiences, an adult learner will attend class with full anticipation and the adult learners can be classified into two categories; those who want to learn and those who must be persuaded to learn. For the former, learning is a pleasurable experience and very rewarding while the latter need inducement to make them want to learn. Thus it is very important for the trainers to acquire skills to handle the adult learners of the cooperative movement.

Other subjects matter that can also be included are public relations, public speaking and methodology of teaching.

d. The Cooperative Societies

The cooperative societies should also take the responsibility in educating their members, board members and the cooperative employees. It is recommended that an in-house education committee be set up by the cooperative, as what CDD have been suggesting since 1987. There should be a national members education policy, where every cooperatives should play their role in educating their members. It is

suggested that every cooperatives should set up their own in-house education committee responsible for formulating, planning, supervising and monitoring the education program of the cooperatives. The committee should liase closely with ANGKASA, as suggested earlier, for assistance in organizing and conducting the program. This will enable the 4.4 million membership (at least some if not all) in the cooperatives movement to get the cooperative training and education and which will definitely lessen the burden of the three organizations in trying to provide cooperative training and education for the cooperative movement.

Beside that the training that will be carried out are tailored to the needs and requirement since they organized and conduct the programs themselves.

Other recommendations includes :-

- * set up a member relation committee to enable members to communicate with the board members and the cooperative employees more effectively.

- * encourage members to attend training programs organize and conducted by the CDD, CCM and ANGKASA by providing the right information regarding the training programs that were conducted by the three organizations. Cooperatives also should provide some

incentives for those who were interested to attend the training programs conducted by the three organizations.

* set up a reading room or small library for the cooperative. They can get assistance from CCM or ANGKASA

* set up the education funds so as to encourage members to participate in the training programs and to provide some allocation for buying the facilities needed in carrying out the training programs.

e. School Cooperatives

One approach of educating the public regarding the cooperative concepts and practices is through the School Cooperatives where the cooperative knowledge was introduced to them at early stage; which can be done at school level. Also in promoting members education for the cooperatives priority should also be given to school cooperatives.

Students (the young generation) will become citizen and leaders of tomorrow. In the context of the cooperative movement, they should be the main target for the cooperative training and education program so as to prepare for the future cooperative leaders in cooperatives. The school

cooperative have great potential of expansion and development as the public at large acknowledges its role in supplementing the education of our young generation.

7.4 CONCLUSION

With an integrated approach and concerted efforts by everyone concerned, we can hope for a strong cooperative movement that would be a credit to the nation.