

Unity Is Strength and Vision: Relevance of Cooperatives in Current Scenario

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Abstract

Since times immemorial, cooperatives have played a vital role in addressing socio-economic challenges faced by vulnerable communities. By empowering individuals, fostering social inclusion, and driving sustainable growth, cooperatives act as key instruments for community transformation. Various government and non-government schemes and programs aim to enhance the financial sustainability and operational efficiency of cooperatives through market expansion, digitization and modernization. The paper while talking about chronological development of cooperatives and evolution of cooperative principles, describes how cooperatives will eventually help India to move towards achieving the UN SDG goals. On one hand Indian cooperatives are aiding in development of rural India and on the other hand they are making India shine on the social and commercial globe. So, the study summarises certain regional stories of Indian cooperatives while projecting global aspects for research in future, by highlighting government policies like Sahkar Se Samridhhi.

Keywords: Cooperatives, Sustainable Development, Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme, Ministry of Cooperation, Inclusive economic growth

1. INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-first century, despite remarkable advancements in science and technology, many people still face socio-economic challenges. Individuals lack access to the resources needed to safeguard their well-being, highlighting the need for innovative, collaborative solutions. By combining and optimizing limited resources, significant improvements in welfare can be achieved. Member-owned organizations, such as cooperatives, offer a viable and effective economic alternative. (Lampinen et al., 2018) These organizations empower disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, helping them achieve goals that is difficult to achieve independently. In a competitive, globalized market, cooperatives maintain a balance between economic and social goals. Few studies have highlighted that cooperatives provide benefits such as increased bargaining power, economies of scale, access to innovative products and services, new market opportunities, and financing options to support growth. As a result, cooperatives have a strong impact on economic lives of people worldwide.

Cooperatives have emerged as a powerful global solution to wide range of socio-economic challenges, paving the way for shared prosperity. (Joshi, 2024). Cooperatives worldwide are increasingly establishing their presence and yielding substantial economic and social benefits. (Matei & Matei, 2012) (Byrne et al., 2015). Studies have found that in both developed and developing countries, they play a vital role in promoting economic and social development. From agricultural cooperatives in Africa and Asia to worker-

owned cooperatives in Europe and Latin America, the cooperative model has successfully empowered communities through collective ownership and collaborative decision-making.(Ortmann & King, 2007). Research conducted on cooperatives in the United States concluded that they have flourished in sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, and renewable energy, significantly contributing to local economies. Similarly, in Europe, cooperatives have been instrumental in fostering social cohesion and addressing inequality during economic crises.

The global recognition of cooperatives' ability to address issues like food insecurity, unemployment, and poverty has grown considerably. For example, in Africa, agricultural cooperatives have helped small-scale farmers improve their livelihoods, reach new markets, and boost productivity.(Mbokazi & Maharaj, 2024). Research in Latin America concluded that cooperatives are essential in providing financial services to the unbanked, enabling them to overcome poverty. As governments reduce regulatory oversight, cooperatives increasingly shape economic activity by encouraging savings, reducing risks for agricultural groups, strengthening community bonds, and creating jobs. Through the pooling of scarce resources and mutual assistance, cooperatives continue to gain momentum as essential drivers of long-term development. They not only foster economic resilience but also promote social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

1.1 Relevance of the study

The motivation for this review paper arises from the growing recognition of cooperatives as a solution to global socio-economic challenges faced by marginalized and vulnerable communities. In an era marked by increasing inequality, resource scarcity, and environmental concerns, cooperatives provide a balanced approach towards economic growth, social inclusion, and sustainability. With governments and international bodies increasingly turning to cooperatives as vehicles for achieving long-term development goals, understanding the effectiveness of cooperative-based initiatives becomes essential. This paper explores the transformative role of cooperatives in addressing global socioeconomic challenges. Cooperatives have demonstrated their capacity to promote economic empowerment, social inclusion, and long-term development by facilitating collective action and empowering marginalized communities. Cooperatives are recognized as effective organizations for sustainable development due to their multifaceted objectives and diverse roles. (Mojo et al., 2015).

Cooperatives are a viable way to build stronger and more sustainable local economies that are, nevertheless, obliged to follow economic strategies without forgetting their mission and social values.(Czternasty, 2014) In India, the government has introduced several initiatives to strengthen the cooperative sector. The establishment of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) in 1963 marked an important step, providing financial support for agricultural and rural services. This effort was further advanced with the creation of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in 1982, which played a pivotal role in enhancing rural credit and fostering cooperative growth. In 1984, the enactment of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act by the Indian Parliament streamlined regulations governing cooperatives operating across state boundaries. The journey toward a unified and robust cooperative framework continued with the introduction of the National Policy on Cooperatives in 2002, aimed at harmonizing the legal framework and reinforcing the cooperative movement nationwide. The Revival Package for Short-Term Cooperative Credit Structure (STCCS) (2006) revitalized cooperative banks and Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) in rural areas, ensured strong financial institutions. The Interest Subvention Scheme for Short-Term Crop Loans (2006-2007) improved farmers' access to affordable credit, and the Integrated Cooperative Development Project (ICDP) facilitated holistic rural development.

Building on these efforts, the Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme was introduced to enhance the financial sustainability and operational efficiency of cooperatives. This scheme promotes modernization, provides targeted financial support, and helps cooperatives thrive in an increasingly competitive economy. By improving access to capital, infrastructure, and capacity-building programs, the scheme enables cooperatives to overcome financial constraints and achieve long-term growth. The scheme's focus on profitability, market expansion, and sustainability helps cooperatives in adopting modern technologies. Complementing this initiative is the formation of the Ministry of Cooperation, which provides policy support, regulatory oversight, and strategic direction to the cooperative sector. The ministry addresses governance challenges, supports cooperative banks, and fosters collaboration across various sectors, creating an enabling environment for cooperatives to flourish. Together, the Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme and the Ministry of Cooperation work to strengthen cooperatives by enhancing their profitability, sustainability, and competitiveness, driving rural development and inclusive economic growth.

In conclusion, this review highlights the enduring relevance of cooperatives in promoting social progress, economic stability, and sustainable development. With strong government support through initiatives such as Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme, cooperatives continue to transform lives and communities, proving that collective action and unity are vital in addressing the socio-economic challenges of the 21st century.

This study presents a comprehensive review of the role and impact of cooperatives in diverse socio-economic settings. By exploring the wide literature, the study aims to show how cooperatives drive community development, promote sustainability, and foster social equity. The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 outlines the key objectives, setting the foundation for the core investigation. Section 3 presents the principles, practices and community development paradigms. Section 4 shows the development of cooperatives over time, tracing their historical roots and growth. Section 5 highlights the evolution of cooperative principles that have shaped their operations globally. Section 6 presents the global cooperative landscape, offering insights into their influence across different regions. Section 7 explores the alignment of cooperatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), showcasing their role in driving global change. Section 8 examines the pivotal role of cooperatives in rural development of India. Section 9 highlights regional success stories from India. Section 10 focuses on the Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme, illustrating how government initiatives strengthen the cooperative movement in India. Section 11 presents the contribution of study. Section 12 concludes the paper with a summary of key findings and reflections on the future role of cooperatives in socio-economic progress.

2.Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are designed to show the profound impact of cooperatives on community well-being and socio-economic development. By examining the various dimensions of cooperative functioning and their contributions to society, this review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of their transformative potential. Below are the objectives of the study.

1. To explore the transformative role of cooperatives in enhancing community well-being.
2. To identify gaps in existing research to pave the way for future studies that deepen understanding of cooperatives impact.
3. To emphasize the vital role of cooperatives in successfully addressing the socio-economic challenges that communities face today.
4. To explore the impact of Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme in fostering rural empowerment and prosperity through cooperative initiatives.

3.Principles, Practices and Community Development Paradigms

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) in its Statement on the Cooperative Identity, 1995 defined a cooperative as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations, through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise. It is a business voluntarily owned and controlled by its member patrons and operated for them and by them on a nonprofit or cost basis.(Kayode Ogundeji & Olajide Talabi, 2012).It is a business enterprise that aims at complete identity of the component factors of ownership, control and use of service, three distinct features that differentiate cooperatives from other businesses

3.1 Values and Principles of Cooperatives

Cooperative principles stem from their values. These are moral grounds which guide, along with general codes, the mindset and behaviour of every cooperator, cooperative leader, or cooperative employee. The ICA puts across its values in a declaration, spelling out, among others, self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. These are personal and ethical behaviours that cooperators equally practice in their enterprises. On the contrary, cooperative principles indicate the guidelines of the manner in which cooperatives operationalize their vision and values. These principles are measured upon the peculiar philosophy and conceptualization of movements with which members rate their successes and form decisions. The cooperative principles are Voluntary and Open Membership; Democratic Member Control; Member Economic Participation; Autonomy and Independence; Education, Training and Information; Cooperation among Cooperatives; and Concern for the Community.

3.2 Cooperatives: A One-of-a-Kind Business Model for Economic Success

Despite type, size, location, or purpose, cooperatives represent one-of-a-kind way for achieving one or more economic objectives in this ever-competitive global economy. These objectives include gaining economy of scale, improving negotiating power with other firms, bulk purchasing to achieve cost around lower prices, sourcing products or services not available by other means, gaining access to markets or expanding market opportunities, improving product or service quality, obtaining credit from lending institutions, and raising incomes.

Cooperatives function along lines similar to any ordinary business, still, they are distinct. A basic distinction between cooperatives and other businesses is based on three dominant categories of people responsible for their formation and continued operation: those who own them (i.e. the shareholders or investors), those who exercise control (i.e. the effective decisionmakers), and those who use them (i.e. the customers). In the case of typical capitalist businesses, especially the bigger enterprises and multinational corporations, these three groups are distinct separate entities. In a small retail business, the first two components may often be the same. In the case of a cooperative, all the three make up the wholesomeness: it is just that those who own, those who control, and those who use are one.

3.3 Community Development Paradigms: Self-help, Asset-based and Self-development

Cooperatives can be used as a strategy under three contemporary community development paradigms: self-help, asset-based, and self-development.

The self-help model places the community at the centre of development process with two specified objectives: improvement of quality of life within community and improvement of community's internal capacity to create further change by institutionalization of the development process. It advocates creating enterprises that are broadly supported by the community and serve goals that help members of the community, versus projects that benefit a limited segment of it.

Some cooperatives are formed by a group of people in a community to satisfy their needs (example,

affordable housing or health service)—but community also gain an advantage generally. Some projects are set up by individuals in the community (example, community development agents and civic leaders) to achieve a larger community development goal; these obtain a double-bottom line, social and economic. They are called as community cooperatives or community business corporations.

Asset-based development begins with assessing a community's resources and combining thoughts on how to harness those resources for the benefit of the community. A community's asset includes human, social, physical, financial, and environmental—collectively called community capital. As they are locally developed, locally owned and locally controlled, cooperatives are an obvious vehicle whereby a community's human capital, social capital, and financial capital are developed.

The process of cooperative development, their membership, and leadership build social capital (norms, relationships, reputation, etc.), from which emerges social cohesion (the ability to act as a unit) within the community. Social capital, is a resource for individuals and communities to build and strengthen up organizations. The trust that individuals have in others is said to be one of the main outcomes, or one measure, of social capital; if you build social capital, then you build trust. The operations of cooperatives build social capital by bringing people together for more interaction within their communities. Cooperatives bring together different segments of community, sub-population groups that do not have opportunity to interact. Cooperatives provide an effective vehicle for the community to get a return on their social capital investment(Majee & Hoyt, 2011).

The most radical of the three approaches is self-development; it is incompatible with the assumption that local development is predetermined either by resource endowments or exogenous factors at work. Taking a very different perspective from the first two approaches, it expressly calls for the local population to engage in entrepreneurship within the local context with the help of local financial resources that have been legally owned.

3.4 Cooperatives as a Strategic Response to Big Retailers and Economic Crises

Cooperatives emerged in response to the desire to be self-sufficient for an entire community—small town or urban neighborhood. For example, in the face of the economic challenges posed by big retailers, many small, local businesses have formed cooperatives. This response is done to multiply the total bargaining power of small-business owners so that they can increase their purchasing power in competition with larger ones. Some famous examples include ACE Hardware (4,800 retailers) and Wakefer Food Corporation, which is composed of the 43 grocery stores that operate the ShopRite supermarkets.

Cooperatives also make investments in their communities in response to crises. They are the last resort buyers; without their purchase, the stores would close, forcing inhabitants to seek the same services in another area.

3.5 Cooperatives and Development: A journey from 1950 to 2024

Over the years, a wealth of studies has explored the pivotal role of cooperatives in fostering economic and social development. Early research laid the groundwork for understanding how these organizations can uplift communities, while ongoing studies continue to uncover their dynamic impact in today's increasingly interconnected and globalized world. As the landscape evolves, cooperatives remain at the heart of conversations on sustainable development, proving their enduring relevance and adaptability in addressing contemporary challenges.

The below table attached provides a comprehensive overview of the contributions made by various authors in the context of cooperatives.

Table 1. Chronological Review of Cooperative’s Literature

Year	Authors	Contributions
1950-1970	Nicholls (1967), Daniel (1968), Glen (1969), Cummings (1970)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.The authors emphasized the significance of cooperatives in adapting to local contexts, highlighting their ability to address community-specific needs and drive development outcomes. 2.By focusing on the grassroots nature of cooperatives, the authors reveal how their strong ties to community needs enable them to act as transformative agents of social and economic progress. 3.The authors contributed valuable insights into the transformative role of universities in the cooperative movement, exemplifying how their innovative strategies have helped solve critical social and urban issues while promoting sustainability.
1971-1990	Andersen (1973), Sen (1987), Booth (1984), Migdal (1988)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.The authors highlighted how cooperatives promoted economic democracy by empowering farmers and fostering rural growth by integrating traditional systems with innovative cooperative models. 2.Highlighting global trends, the authors showcased how Europe was stabilized by cooperatives and how the Far East emerged as a rising force, demonstrating the adaptability and resilience of cooperatives in diverse and dynamic contexts.
1991-2010	Patrick (1993), Fairbairn (1994), Wilson (1996), Dogarawa (2010)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.The authors delved into the development of core strategies aimed at global community transformation, illustrating how community-integrated tourism models have successfully generated substantial socioeconomic benefits. 2.Through a detailed analysis of Africa, the authors revealed how cooperatives have been instrumental in reducing poverty by creating access to essential resources such as finance, employment, education, and social welfare. 3.Focusing on India, the authors highlighted the impact of communication programs in empowering women, emphasizing the role of collective action and participatory decision-making in driving gender equality and social progress.
2011-2015	George (2014), Jerker (2013), Lan (2014)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.The authors highlighted the pivotal role of cooperatives in rural development, showcasing their resilience and impact despite the numerous challenges they encountered.

Year	Authors	Contributions
		<p>2.By examining key factors such as income generation, strong leadership, valuable experience and impactful activities, the authors illustrated how these elements have been essential in driving the success of cooperatives.</p> <p>3.The authors explored how small firms have harnessed the power of cooperatives for resource access and risk management, emphasizing the importance of trust and efficient management in ensuring their prosperity.</p>
2016-2020	Stavros (2017), Ajates (2020), Langmead (2017), Kalogiannidis (2020)	<p>1.The authors emphasized how agricultural cooperatives empowered small farmers by enhancing their bargaining power, while energy cooperatives fostered local control, sustainability, and social innovation.</p> <p>2.By examining renewable energy cooperatives, the authors highlighted the scaling challenges these cooperatives faced and emphasized the need for collective strategies to overcome hurdles and ensure long-term success.</p> <p>3.The authors shed light on the economic pressures faced by worker cooperatives, delving into the difficulties they encounter in maintaining stability and growth amid challenging economic conditions.</p> <p>4. In their analysis, the authors redefined rural prosperity, by focusing not just on economic growth but also on the importance of social capital, innovation, and resilience as key drivers of sustainable rural development.</p>
2021-2024	Andrew (2022), Iyer (2021), Wahyuningtyas (2023), James (2021)	<p>1.The authors demonstrated how cooperatives have empowered communities worldwide, stressing the importance of improved training and stronger government support to maximize cooperatives potential.</p> <p>2.By exploring post-pandemic recovery, the authors underscored the critical role of cooperatives and emphasized the need for enhanced collaboration within the social and solidarity economy to accelerate recovery efforts.</p> <p>3. The authors highlighted how smart rural communities have effectively utilized ICT to drive progress and align with the United Nations</p>

Year	Authors	Contributions
		Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), showcasing innovation in rural development. 4. Focusing on sustainability, the authors argue that community-driven social capital and the adoption of renewable energy are essential in fostering long-term environmental and social resilience.

4. Development of Cooperatives Over Time

Cooperatives have a rich history which reflects the evolving needs of communities. Their journey began in Europe during the middle of 18th century, with one of the earliest known cooperative formed in 1750 by cheese producers in France. However, the founding of the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers in 1844 in England is considered the true foundation of the modern cooperative movement. Key figures like Robert Owen in the UK and Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen in Germany played significant roles in spreading cooperative ideas, in the agricultural sectors of Denmark and France. These early efforts laid the groundwork for the global cooperative principles that exist today.

By the 19th century, cooperatives had expanded rapidly, moving beyond simple consumer cooperatives to include sectors such as agriculture, industry, energy, and financial services (saving and credit cooperatives). The Rochdale Society grew into businesses like flour mills and textile plants, embodying the cooperative values of democratic member control and economic participation. By 1863, more than 400 cooperative societies were operating in Britain. This era marked the establishment of International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) (1895), which unified cooperative movement across the globe and upheld shared guiding principles.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked the middle stage of cooperative development, with sector-specific cooperatives emerging in agriculture, energy and tourism. The ICA played a pivotal role in organizing international meetings and sharing best practices, ensuring that cooperatives are recognized as a vital economic force across various sectors.

Government initiatives have played a crucial role in supporting the growth and sustainability of cooperatives in India. Early efforts, such as the Cooperative Credit Societies Act of 1904 and the Cooperative Societies Act of 1912, laid the legal foundation for cooperatives, while key committees like the Maclagan Committee (1915) and the Royal Commission on Agriculture (1928) shaped policies to drive the sector forward. The establishment of the Reserve Bank of India (1934) introduced financial regulation, and the Multi-Unit Cooperative Societies Act of 1942 enabled cooperatives to operate across states. Post-independence, the government continued to strengthen cooperatives through initiatives like National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) (1965) and the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) (1963), which supported rural industries. The creation of NABARD in 1982 provided long-term financial support, while reforms such Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act (2002) and the National Cooperative Policy (2002) modernized the sector. These efforts resulted in the Constitution (97th Amendment) Act of 2011, which elevated cooperatives to constitutional status, solidifying their role as key drivers of economic empowerment. In this ongoing journey, the Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme, launched in 2021, stands out as a recent and targeted initiative designed to build upon these foundational efforts. By offering capacity-building programs, financial access, and technical

assistance, the scheme enhances cooperatives' operational capabilities and boost their market strength. The scheme empowers cooperatives with resources for skill development, infrastructure improvement, and access to modern technologies. The scheme is thus a continuation of the government's long-standing commitment to support cooperatives. Figure 1 shows the development milestones of cooperative movement in India.

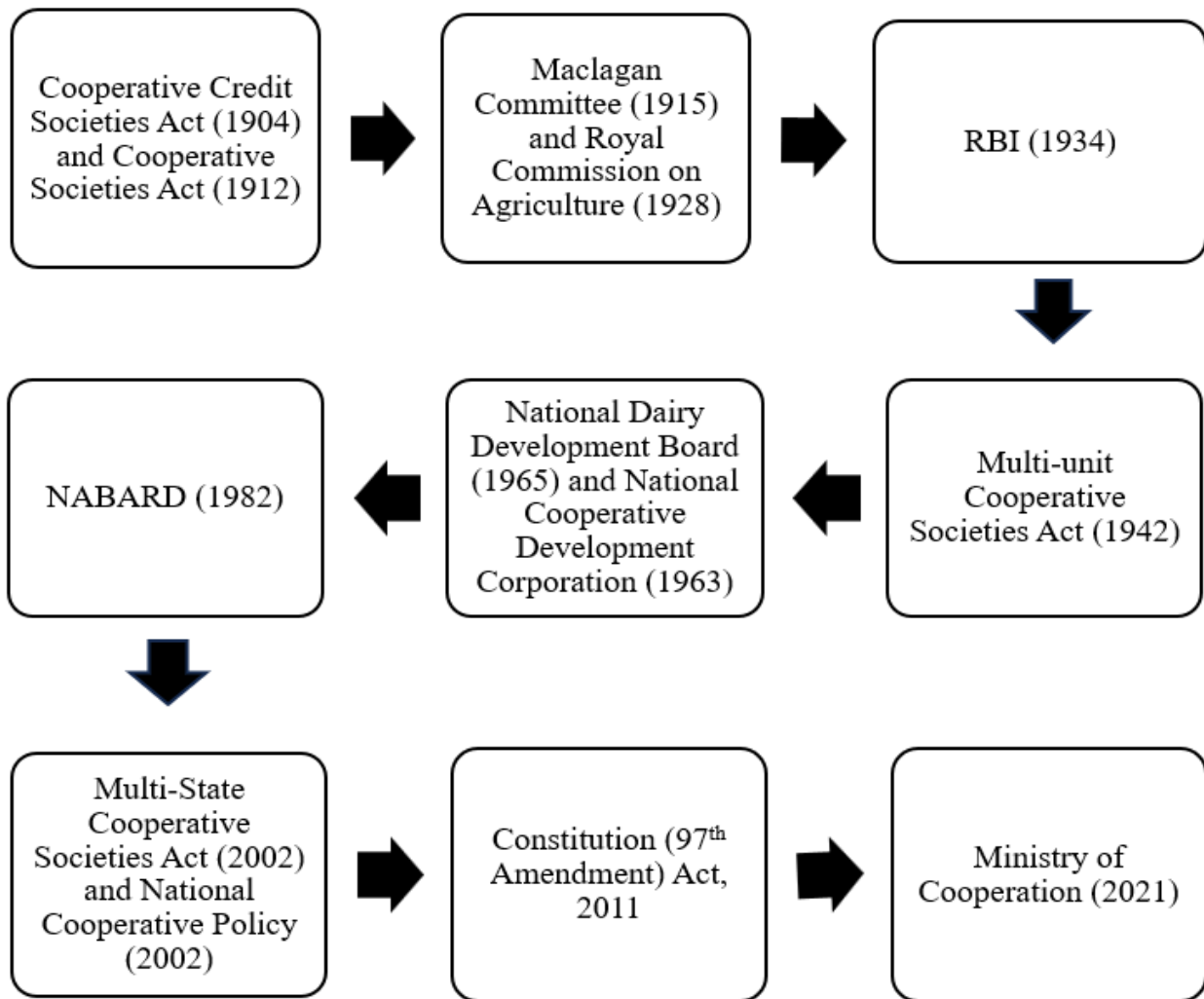


Figure 1. Development Milestones of Cooperative Movement in India

In the contemporary context, cooperatives have significantly modernized and expanded on a global scale. These organizations have successfully transitioned from traditional sectors to innovative areas such as renewable energy, digital services, and e-commerce, demonstrating their versatility to contemporary needs. For example, many cooperatives are now actively engaged in the renewable energy sector, empowering communities to generate their own energy through sustainable sources (like solar and wind). This shift not only addresses the urgent demand for clean energy but also enhances local economic resilience by reducing reliance on external suppliers. The role of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) is vital as they provide essential financial services that support local economic development. Worker cooperatives empower individuals and foster a sense of community and collaboration among them. Education cooperatives contribute to the community spirit by promoting learning and skill

development. Water cooperatives play a key role in managing local water resources, ensuring that communities have access to clean and sustainable water supplies. In the digital era, cooperatives leverage technology to provide essential services, such as online platforms for marketing local products, facilitating peer-to-peer lending, and offering educational resources. This digital transformation not only enables cooperatives to reach wider audiences but also enhances operational efficiency and creates new revenue streams.

These advancements significantly strengthen the overall impact of cooperatives across diverse sectors, demonstrating their critical role in addressing modern challenges.

5. Evolution of Cooperative Principles

As the cooperatives evolved over time, the ideologies of their functioning also kept evolving. Just as business and technology grew along generations, the principles governing the cooperative organisations also faced paradigm shifts. In 1844, the Rochdale Pioneers established the first cooperative principle, which emphasized open membership, democratic decision-making, and fair profit-sharing. These foundational principles created a framework for modern cooperatives, allowing members to have a voice in how their organizations should run and ensured that profits are shared fairly among them. As the world changed, so did the needs of cooperatives. In 1937, the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) recognized the need to adapt these principles to address new global challenges, making cooperatives relevant in diverse cultural and economic contexts. This update was crucial in ensuring that cooperative organization thrive, regardless of scenarios in different countries. In 1966, ICA made further revisions, emphasizing how cooperatives in the post-war era should contribute to economic and social development. This shift highlighted the important role cooperatives play in promoting not just economic growth, but also social well-being and community development. In 1995, the ICA introduced new ideas into its principles (such as environmental responsibility) with a commitment of care towards local communities. This update aimed to address the global issues related to sustainability and social responsibility. Today, these principles continue to guide cooperatives as they adapt to contemporary challenges.

6. Global Cooperative Landscape

The global cooperative landscape, as evidenced by numerous studies, explains the crucial role of cooperatives in shaping the socio-economic structure of societies. These organizations strive to achieve sustainability in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. However, they face significant challenges that hinder their progress. While the legal and administrative frameworks in various countries aim to support the growth of cooperatives, the success of these entities often appears distant. Table 2 shows an overview of cooperatives across nations.

Table 2. Cooperatives across Nations: Economic Contributions and Sustainability Practices

Country	Type of Cooperatives	Economic and Social Impact	Sustainability Practices	Challenges Faced
United States	Worker Cooperatives	1. Encourages stable employment and fair profit sharing. 2. Boost worker empowerment and	Focus on sustainable energy, equal pay, and ethical business methods.	Difficult to scale and compete with big organisations.

Country	Type of Cooperatives	Economic and Social Impact	Sustainability Practices	Challenges Faced
		community-based ownership across multiple sectors.		
Germany	Housing Cooperatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provides citizens with affordable housing options. 2. Strengthen community relationships, boost inclusivity, and ensure that everyone has access to housing. 	Focus on energy-effective building designs and green construction.	Regulatory challenges and rising construction cost in cities.
Spain	Worker Cooperatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contribute to the local economy and generate jobs. 2. Promote economic democracy, enhance worker participation, and eliminate disparities in income. 	Focus on equitable pay, worker ownership and conservation of energy in industries.	Competition from big international corporations and delayed adoption in certain areas.
Kenya	Agricultural Cooperatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced agricultural yields and farmer income. 2. Fosters rural development, increases food security and empower smallholder farmers. 	Encourages organic farming and sustainable land use methods.	Limited access to financing and markets, weather-related risks.
India	Agricultural and Credit Cooperatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boost rural economic prosperity by enhancing farmer income and offering loans. 2. Encourages rural development, employment creation and poverty reduction. 	Promotes organic and sustainable agriculture.	Market instability and climate issues.
Canada	Retail Cooperatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports local economies by offering affordable goods and services. 2. Create stable employment for 	Prioritise local sourcing, reduce carbon footprints, and encourage fair trade.	Competition from big retail chains and online businesses.

Country	Type of Cooperatives	Economic and Social Impact	Sustainability Practices	Challenges Faced
		community members, stimulate economic growth, and reduce unemployment in regions.		
Brazil	Housing Cooperatives	1.Provides affordable homes to low and middle-income families. 2.Enhances social interactions and develops communal bonding in cities.	Emphasise on affordable housing designs.	Regulatory barriers and financial constraints to expand in rapidly urbanising areas.
South Africa	Health Cooperatives	Boost healthcare accessibility in underserved areas.	Encourage community health education and preventive care.	Funding issues and lack of public knowledge about cooperative healthcare models.
Argentina	Energy Cooperatives	1.Offer affordable and green energy to rural communities. 2.Empower local communities, improve energy access, and lower expenses.	Focus on renewable energy, especially solar and wind.	Infrastructure challenges and limited access to technology in remote areas.
Mexico	Fishing Cooperatives	1.Support local economy with sustainable fishing and green tourism. 2.Boost coastal community development and preserve traditional livelihoods.	Encourage sustainable fishing and marine preservation efforts.	Resource depletion due to overfishing.

7.Cooperatives and SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were established in 2012 by the United Nations (UN) at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. These goals were created to meet the targets that were not met by the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). SDGs are distinct from MDGs as they pledge to include all nations unlike MDGs which included only low and middle income nations. SDGs cover various sectors such as agriculture, housing, health and education. They address key global issues such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, climate change, and peace. Cooperatives provide major contributions to the SDGs due to their involvement in varied

sectors and this also makes cooperatives relevant even after so many years of their origin. For example, the UN's SDG 1 (Poverty reduction) aligns closely with objective of cooperative to meet the socioeconomic needs of members. SDG 8 (Decent work and Economic growth) is consistent with cooperatives' democratic and member-centred strategy, which promotes equal employment and empowerment. SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 17 (Partnership for Goals) both promote cooperative efforts.

At the national and global levels, cooperatives play an important role in accomplishing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), a few of which are discussed below.

1) SDG-1 (No poverty)

In India, cooperatives play a vital role in poverty alleviation as highlighted by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) which reports that these organizations have created jobs across diverse sectors, provided livelihoods to millions, and contributed significantly to reducing poverty levels. For example, women cooperatives in Madhya Pradesh promote women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) that empower members through microfinance, which enable them to start small businesses, improve their livelihoods, and lift their families out of poverty. The Kochi Fishery Cooperative Society in Kerala empowers fishermen by allowing them to collectively market their catch, which contributes to poverty reduction in coastal communities. The Kullu Weavers Cooperative Society in Himachal Pradesh plays a significant role in supporting local artisans by providing them with market access and ensuring fair prices for their handwoven products. This empowerment not only helps preserve traditional crafts but also enhances the economic well-being of the artisans. The Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank helps in poverty reduction by offering affordable loans to farmers and rural entrepreneurs.

Globally, cooperatives have made significant advances in poverty alleviation, serving as vital engines of economic empowerment and social cohesion in communities around the world. In Tanzania, marketing of products like milk and coffee through cooperatives has enabled members to afford their children's education (Anania et al., 2020). In Egypt, around 4 million farmers earn income by selling their crops through agricultural marketing cooperatives (Albaum, 1966). In Ethiopia, an estimated 900,000 people in the agricultural sector rely on cooperatives for their primary income (Melak et al., 2018). In Ghana, loans from the University of Ghana Cooperative Credit Union support informal businesses that supplement members' incomes (Steel & Andah, 2008). In Tanzania and Sri Lanka, multi-purpose Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) offer small loans and working capital to members enabling them to start businesses and support their growth.

2) SDG-5 (Gender Equality)

Cooperatives in India play a crucial role in promoting gender equality and empowering women as seen with SEWA (Self-Employed Women Association), Gujarat which organizes women into cooperatives and provide them access to microfinance, healthcare, and legal support, thereby enhancing their socio-economic status. In the dairy sector, AMUL (Anand Milk Union Limited) empowers women dairy farmers by organizing them into cooperatives and securing fair prices for their milk, promoting both economic stability and empowerment. In Rajasthan, women cooperatives in the handicraft sector enable artisans to access market and earn fair wages for their products, enhancing both their livelihoods and economic independence.

Globally, cooperatives demonstrate significant women participation. For example, in Japan, women make up the majority of cooperative members and have established a strong presence in their governance structure. Studies conducted in the Spanish Confederation of Worker Cooperatives (COCETA) concluded

that women make up 49 percent of members, with 39 percent holding directorial positions. In Italy, majority of members in workers' cooperatives within the fashion industry are women. Since 2005, women's membership in Tanzania's financial cooperative sector has quadrupled, reflecting a significant shift toward gender inclusion and empowerment (Mbunda, 2024) In Uganda, women's participation in agricultural cooperatives is growing at a faster rate than that of men highlighting a positive trend toward gender equality in the agriculture sector. In East Africa, women's presence on financial cooperative boards varies across countries, with Kenya showing lower representation and Tanzania demonstrating a significantly higher level of gender inclusion. Studies conducted in Palestine reported that despite a historical trend of low female participation in cooperatives, the Union of Cooperative Associations for Savings and Credit now includes a significant majority of women among its members marking a positive shift toward gender inclusion

3) SDG-4 (Quality Education)

Cooperatives in India contribute to SDG 4, which emphasizes inclusive and quality education while promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. For example, Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA) in Gujarat not only empowers women through economic activities but also offers educational resources and training programs that enhance their skills and literacy levels. In the agricultural sector, cooperatives such as AMUL provide training sessions for farmers on sustainable farming practices and financial literacy, enhancing their overall knowledge and boosting productivity. Fishery cooperatives in coastal regions conduct workshops on safe fishing techniques and environmental conservation, ensuring that members are well-informed about their trade and the importance of adopting sustainable practices. Karnataka Milk Federation promote children's education by supporting initiatives that offer scholarships to the children of dairy farmers, thereby encouraging quality education within rural communities.

Globally, cooperatives are making significant contributions toward SDG 4 by fostering equitable access to quality education. For example in Kenya, the primary type of back-office loan provided by most SACCOs is set aside to pay school fees, a trend that is similar in other African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Cape Verde, and Uganda.(Sarah, 2023).Where local governments have struggled to provide adequate school infrastructure, cooperatives steps in to fill the gap by building and supporting local schools. Studies have shown that in Ghana and Ethiopia, multipurpose cooperatives have utilized fair trade rebates to support social projects such as construction of classrooms and enhancement of infrastructure in primary schools. In the UK, the Manchester-based Cooperative College has established democratically driven cooperative trust schools, that are firmly committed to social justice and moral purpose.(Facer et al., 2012)

4) SDG-3 (Good Health and well-being)

Cooperatives in India play a key role in achieving SDG 3 which focuses on promoting healthy lives and well-being for all. For example, the Kerala Cooperative Medical Services offer affordable healthcare services to low-income families, significantly easing their access to medical care. AMUL offers nutritional education and promote safe milk production practices, contributing to better health of consumers. Cooperatives like the SEWA (Self-Employed Women Association) in Gujarat provide healthcare services, maternal health programs, and awareness campaigns on hygiene and nutrition empowering women to make informed health choices for themselves and their families. In coastal regions, fishery cooperatives organize health camps and promote awareness about waterborne diseases, helping community members to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Globally, Canada is home to over 100 healthcare cooperatives that provide home care services to

individuals across its eight provinces (Labrie, 2021). In Japan, more than 125 medical cooperatives serve nearly 3 million patients. (Kikuchi et al., 2022). In the United States, healthcare cooperatives operate hospitals and clinics, such as the Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound, which serves 650,000 members and operates 30 medical facilities with a workforce of 9,500 employees, including 1,000 physicians. (Nairobi, 2018).

5) SDG-6 (Access to water and sanitation)

In the context of SDG-6, the Sahakar Bharati cooperative in Maharashtra has initiated water conservation projects in drought-prone areas, constructed dams and promoted rainwater harvesting, to secure water for agricultural use and support rural communities. In Gujarat, AMUL has promoted efficient water management practices among dairy farmers and encouraged the adoption of water-saving technologies in milk production and cattle rearing. In Madhya Pradesh, the Narmada Valley Cooperative Water User Association have played a crucial role in the equitable distribution of irrigation water among farmers, ensuring sustainable agricultural practices and effective water conservation. In Kerala, cooperative-led initiatives have successfully provided clean drinking water and sanitation facilities in rural areas, reduced waterborne diseases and improved public health. These efforts highlight how cooperatives in India are handling water scarcity, enhancing access to clean water, and promoting sustainable water management, all of which contribute to the broader goals of SDG 6.

In the global movement toward sustainable development, cooperatives are not just participants but leaders in addressing water challenges, embodying the principles of collaboration and community empowerment essential for achieving SDG 6. For example, SAGUAPAC located in the Bolivian city of Santa Cruz is the largest urban water cooperative in the world, with 183,000 water connections that serve 1.2 million people, three quarters of the city's population, while ensuring one of the highest water quality standards in Latin America. (Saner et al., 2015). Water cooperatives also extend their services to remote locations that would otherwise lack access to clean water. In the US, cooperatives represent the most prevalent organizational form of water provision in small suburban and rural communities. Approximately 3,300 water cooperatives offer safe, reliable, and sustainable water services, including drinking water, fire protection, landscape irrigation, and wastewater management, all at reasonable costs.

(Deane & Domhnaill, 2021)

8. Role of Cooperatives in development of Rural India

Cooperatives in India have long been a strong pillar of rural development and agricultural advancements. Rooted in principles of collective responsibility and mutual benefit, cooperatives have played a pivotal role in reducing costs for farmers, while simultaneously increasing their market access and enhancing their bargaining power. Emerged in the pre-independence era as a response to the widespread exploitation by moneylenders, cooperatives soon became essential in protecting farmers' interests. Post-independence, their influence expanded to key sectors such as dairy, textiles, and consumer goods. The Five-Year Plans accelerated their expansion by providing financial assistance, building infrastructure, and encouraging training and educational programs. Cooperatives as a result improved rural livelihoods, increased agricultural output, and pulled families out of poverty. They strengthened rural communities by group action, social capital and democratic involvement. They improved livelihoods by providing financial resources and increasing market access.

Cooperatives promote financial inclusion by providing affordable financing, allowing members to make investments in their future. They also help in sustainable agriculture, which improves long-term

productivity.

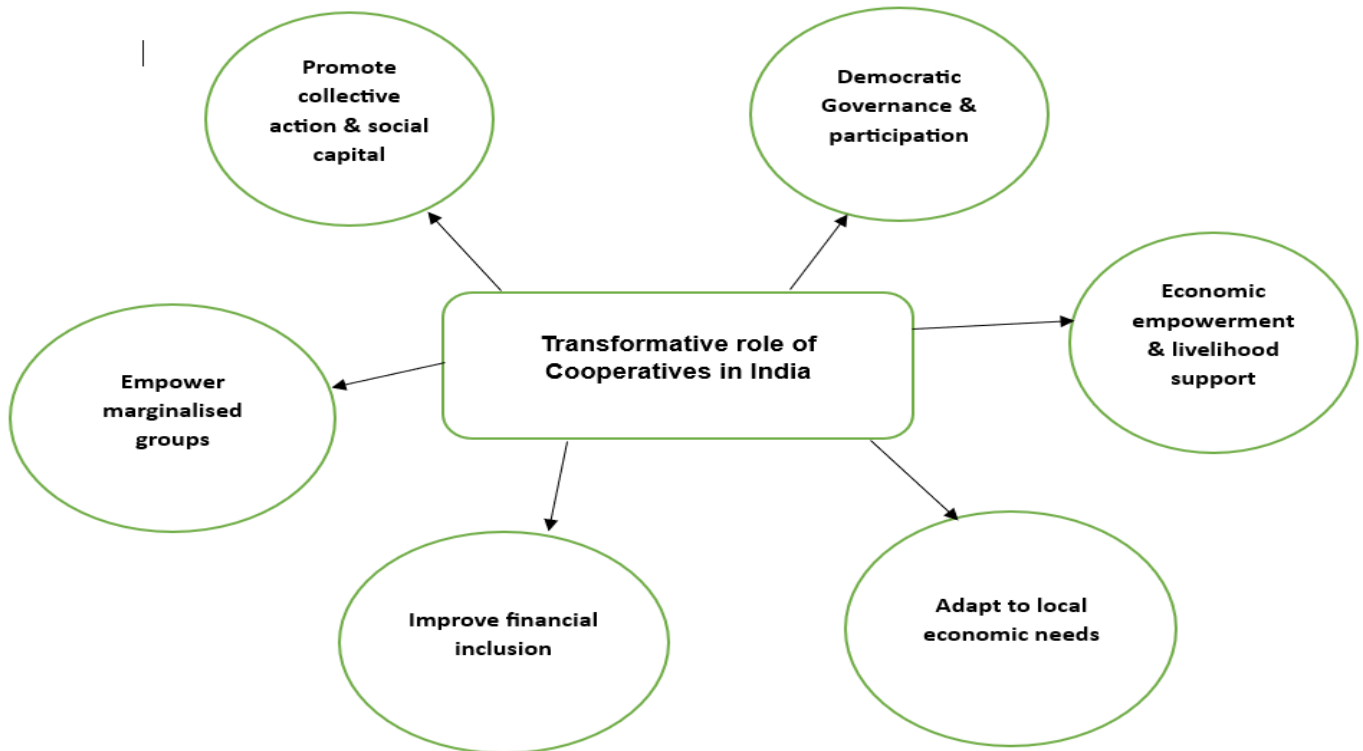


Figure 2. Multifaceted role of Cooperatives in India

Beyond economics, cooperatives elevate communities in health care, education, and women's empowerment. They promote resilience by promoting savings and resource sharing among members. Cooperatives promote sustainable rural development and socioeconomic success by empowering marginalised communities and upgrading rural infrastructure. Figure 2 shows the diverse role played by cooperatives in India.

9. Regional Success Stories of Cooperatives in India

India's cooperative movement has flourished across diverse regions and sectors. In the Northern region, cooperatives like Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) have played a pivotal role in supporting farmers by providing affordable fertilizers and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) has strengthened agricultural marketing by offering fair prices and market access to farmers. In the Southern region, the Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (KCMMF) has transformed the dairy industry by organizing dairy farmers into a cooperative model. Another success is of Kerala State Coir Corporation (KSCC) which supported coir workers by providing them with modern infrastructure and access to global markets, enabling them to improve well-being of communities. In the Eastern region, the Odisha State Cooperative Milk Producers Federation (OMFED) has been a crucial driver of the dairy sector, promoting local milk production, enhancing farmer income, and ensuring a stable supply of milk to consumers. The West Bengal Handloom Cooperative has played a significant role in preserving traditional weaving practices, empowered artisans, and provided them access to national and international markets. In the Western

region, Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank (MSCB) supported farmers and rural entrepreneurs by providing affordable credit. This enabled agricultural and small-scale industries to flourish, contributing to rural development and poverty reduction in the region.

Northern Region of India

- **Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO):** Headquartered in Delhi, one of the world's largest cooperative society, has made substantial contributions to agricultural output in UP, Haryana, and Punjab. It provided farmers with affordable fertilizers. IFFCO's cooperative approach assures that its revenues are reinvested in communities by providing greater agricultural assistance with R & D.
- **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED):** A national-level cooperative based in New Delhi, plays an important role in agricultural product marketing. It enables farmers in North India to sell their crop at fair prices, assuring adequate pay for their efforts. NAFED has effectively facilitated the acquisition of essential commodities such as oilseeds, pulses, and cereals, ensuring stable market prices.

Southern Region of India

- **Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (KCMMF):** A successful Kerala cooperative that mirrors the Amul model. It helps dairy farmers get fair prices and high-quality inputs. It encourages training, education, and rural development, which helps farmers to improve their social and economic position.
- **Kerala State Coir Corporation (KSCC):** The coir sector in Kerala has benefited greatly from the cooperative movement. KSCC shows how cooperative assist craftsmen, particularly women, who get access to higher income, market exposure, and better working environment. The cooperative promotes sustainable growth of rural areas with a focus on production and export of high-quality coir products.

Eastern Region of India

- **Orissa State Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation (OMFED):** OMFED, based in Odisha, is a growing dairy cooperative that serves as an essential platform for eastern India's dairy farmers. OMFED with the goal of improving the livelihoods of rural dairy farmers, focus on the acquisition, processing, and distribution of milk and related products. Members receive input services such as veterinary services, feed, and various other agricultural services.
- **West Bengal State Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society (TANTUJA):** A vital cooperative in eastern India's handloom sector that helps handloom weavers by offering design development, promotion, and distribution channels. It ensures that traditional craft remains economically viable. The cooperative helps to preserve and promote Bengal's rich textile heritage.

Western Region of India

- **Anand Milk Union Limited (AMUL):** Amul, a Gujarat-based cooperative, is one of the world's most successful. It elevated India to the world's biggest milk producer and benefited many small-scale dairy farmers in the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. The "White Revolution" has become the backbone of rural growth in western India.
- **Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank (MSCB):** Maharashtra is well known for its robust cooperative banking sector, and MSCB is a major cooperative bank that has aided farmers and small-scale businesses in western India. MSCB offers loans, banking facilities and financial assistance to several agricultural and rural industries through its member bank network. Its strong cooperative

banking model has aided in the financial inclusion of Maharashtra's rural communities.

10. Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme

The latest chapter in the evolution of cooperatives in India unfolds with the launch of the Sahkar Se Samridhhi Initiative in 2021 by the Ministry of Cooperation. This strategic move aims to revitalize and strengthen the cooperative sector, recognizing its pivotal role in driving economic growth in rural areas. The initiative was designed to address key challenges faced by cooperatives, such as limited access to financial resources, outdated infrastructure, and the urgent need for capacity building among members.

At its core, the initiative seeks to empower cooperatives, equipping them with the tools, knowledge, and financial support to become more viable, sustainable, and competitive in today's marketplace. Through loans, subsidies, and modern business practices, it is helping transform cooperatives into self-reliant entities. A strong emphasis on skill development and training ensures that cooperative members are equipped with essential financial management skills and effective business strategies.

Fostering collaboration and unity, the initiative strengthens the cooperative network, promoting social cohesion and collective responsibility. By facilitating market expansion and improving operational efficiency, it aligns with the government's broader vision of creating a resilient cooperative movement that significantly contributes to rural development, economic resilience, and poverty alleviation. The spirit of cooperation is central to this transformation, with a focus on creating an inclusive economy where the benefits of progress are shared equitably.

At the heart of this effort is the Ministry of Cooperation, which provides focused leadership to strengthen India's cooperative movement. By overseeing policy formulation, regulation, and implementation of key programs, the Ministry ensures that cooperatives have the support they need to thrive. Its role as a central coordinating body has been instrumental in promoting governance reforms, fostering transparency, and enhancing accountability within cooperative institutions. These reforms, combined with an emphasis on member participation, are laying the foundation for the long-term viability and competitiveness of cooperatives across sectors.

Through its collaboration with Sahkar Se Samridhhi, the Ministry is helping cooperatives grow from local actors to national players. With a strategic focus on modernization, digital tools, and capacity building, the Ministry is ensuring that cooperatives are not only more efficient but also better equipped to tackle the challenges of the modern economy. This partnership is transforming the cooperative sector into a powerful engine for rural and national development.

As cooperatives take on a more prominent role in shaping an inclusive economy, their impact is increasingly felt in marginalized communities, sustainable agriculture, and social inclusion. Together, the Ministry and cooperatives are building a more resilient and equitable economy—one that leaves a lasting and meaningful impact on the lives of people across India.

Together, the Ministry of Cooperation and Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme ensure that cooperative model remains an essential pillar in India's development journey, fostering growth, equity, and sustainability for all.

10.1 Key Components of Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme

- Offer low-interest loans and subsidies to cooperatives in sectors such as agriculture, housing, credit, and marketing, to expand operations.
- Provide training in business management, financial planning, and governance to equip cooperative members with the skills needed to overcome challenges.

- Encourages adoption of modern technologies (such as e-governance and digital marketing platforms) to enhance operational efficiency and expand market reach.
- Funds storage and processing facilities such as warehouses, cold storage, and processing units to overcome rural infrastructure challenges.
- Aids cooperatives in finding new markets (such as export opportunities), and facilitates their participation in international trade fairs and exhibitions to broaden market access.

10.2 Impact of Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme

The Sahkar Se Samriddhi Scheme aims to improve India’s cooperative sector by providing financial and technical support. It helps cooperatives to increase their productivity and profits. The scheme strengthens agricultural cooperatives by making them more productive, improving their access to markets, and encouraging sustainable farming practices. It provides training, supports marginalized communities, and promotes social welfare. By helping cooperatives find new international markets, the scheme boosts India’s potential to export. With a focus on modern technology and sustainable methods, the scheme ensures that cooperatives thrive in long run while remaining environment friendly.

10.3 Mapping the Cooperative Sector: Insights from National Cooperative Union of India

According to data from National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), there are 854,000 cooperative units in the country, spread across 739 districts in 20 major states. As shown in Table 3, states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh are performing quite well while states like Uttarakhand, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir are lagging behind. To strengthen the cooperative movement in the underperforming states, it's important to register new cooperative societies and encourage community participation, which improves social and economic conditions and helps in achieving the goals of the scheme.

The data shows regional imbalances in the cooperative sector, which prompted Amit Shah (Minister of Cooperation) to launch a mission which will connect every village and individual with cooperatives.

Table 3. Expansion of Cooperatives in 20 States and Union Territories

S.No.	States/UT	Cooperative Institutions (in lakhs)	Number of districts	District wise Institutions
1.	Maharashtra	2.059	36	5719
2.	Gujarat	0.776	33	2350
3.	Andhra Pradesh	0.732	26	2816
4.	Telangana	0.652	34	1916
5.	Karnataka	0.409	29	1416
6.	West Bengal	0.337	25	1346
7.	Kerala	0.193	14	1376
8.	Haryana	0.246	22	1117
9.	Bihar	0.392	38	1031
10.	Madhya Pradesh	0.474	52	912
11.	Rajasthan	0.285	33	862
12.	Punjab	0.174	22	793
13.	Tamil Nadu	0.245	38	644
14.	Uttar Pradesh	0.482	76	638

S.No.	States/UT	Cooperative Institutions (in lakhs)	Number of districts	District wise Institutions
15.	Odisha	0.173	30	578
16.	Jharkhand	0.139	24	577
17.	Uttarakhand	0.056	13	433
18.	Chhattisgarh	0.114	27	421
19.	Assam	0.102	33	310
20.	J& K	0.020	20	101
	ALL INDIA	8.544	739	1156

Source: NCUI website

11. Contribution of study

This research paper builds upon existing literature by offering a comprehensive exploration of the transformative role of cooperatives in socio-economic development. By tracing their evolution from early European roots to their global presence today, it aligns with prior studies that highlight cooperatives' historical significance and their continued relevance in addressing modern economic and social challenges. This review contributes to the literature by bridging historical perspectives with contemporary developments in the Indian context, where initiatives like the Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme seek to unlock the long-term potential of cooperatives for national progress.

The paper reinforces previous findings that cooperatives have played a crucial role in community development, economic resilience, and social equity. However, it extends the discourse by identifying key research gaps in understanding the impact of recent policy interventions on cooperative sustainability and growth. While existing studies have emphasized cooperatives' contributions to employment generation, rural empowerment, and financial inclusion, this research highlights the need for deeper analysis of government support mechanisms, such as the Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme, in shaping cooperative success in India.

Additionally, the study connects cooperative movements to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing their role in fostering inclusive economic growth, gender equality, and poverty reduction. By synthesizing insights from past research and contemporary case studies, it underscores cooperatives' capacity to drive sustainable livelihoods and long-term social transformation. Overall, this paper strengthens the academic discourse on cooperatives by integrating historical, policy, and global perspectives. It not only reaffirms cooperatives' contributions as documented in previous studies but also serves as a foundation for future research on how targeted government initiatives can enhance their effectiveness. By doing so, it encourages further inquiry into the evolving role of cooperatives in fostering innovation, economic inclusion, and social development in an increasingly interconnected world.

12. Conclusion and Summary

Cooperatives are vital in driving economic development and fostering social empowerment within rural and marginalized communities. By fostering collective ownership and decision-making, they enhance economic resilience and contribute to community welfare. The Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme strengthens

cooperatives in India by boosting financial sustainability, capacity building, market expansion, and technology adoption. However, challenges persist such as bureaucratic obstacles to financial access, limited awareness in rural areas, difficulties in adopting new technologies and rising competition from private companies.

The findings highlight the crucial role of cooperatives as key economic and social contributors to sustainable development and financial inclusion. With effective implementation, the Sahkar Se Samridhhi scheme has the potential to transform the cooperative sector. However, collective efforts are needed to reduce regional and sectoral imbalances, strengthen governance and leadership within cooperatives, and enhance their operational systems. Governments, along with cooperative members, must extend the necessary financial, legislative, and capacity-building support to ensure cooperatives continue to drive economic growth and social cohesion.

Despite the crucial role of cooperatives, they face significant obstacles towards growth such as complex legal procedures, insufficient national data, unprofessional management practices, and outdated legislation. The literature shows that with unforeseen circumstances, the future of cooperatives is likely going to suffer from internal obstacles which include management incompetence, hubris and radical self-management (Széll, 2018). Without performance-based incentive and flexible internal structure, cooperatives struggle to evolve as dynamic enterprises. Rural cooperatives face challenges in accessing financial resources and adopting modern technologies due to limited expertise and funding. These issues are intensified by digital divide, while poor documentation of cooperatives' contributions to national development limits their recognition. A widespread lack of awareness and education about the cooperative business model restricts cooperatives from reaching their full potential.

Studies on the long-and short-term implications of cooperative initiative on national and global development are needed. Future research should focus on creating an analytical framework to assess the challenges cooperatives face. Further studies are needed to examine how regulatory and policy reforms can create a more supportive environment for cooperative growth. Investigating the long-term impacts of the Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme is essential in enhancing market competitiveness, improving governance, and advancing technology adoption within cooperatives. Further research should aim to quantify and document the contribution of cooperatives to national and global development, in terms of job creation and financial inclusion.

The future of cooperatives lies on accurate strategic planning for short term and long term with inclusion of implementation process and mostly depends on collective fund established by all Cooperative organizations (Abd el-aal, 2019)

The research paper summarizes the vital role of cooperatives in addressing contemporary socio-economic challenges while reinforcing their historical significance and adaptability as highlighted throughout the literature. By synthesizing various perspectives on cooperative functioning, the paper illustrates how these organizations not only empower marginalized communities but also contribute to broader goals such as sustainable development and social equity. The findings underscore the importance of cooperatives in fostering rural empowerment and economic resilience, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) discussed in the literature. Furthermore, the paper calls for future research on initiatives like the Sahkar Se Samridhhi Scheme, emphasizing the need for exploration of cooperatives' long-term impacts, thereby enriching the academic discourse and providing a foundation for scholars to build upon. Ultimately, this comprehensive review not only enhances the understanding of cooperatives' contributions to community well-being but also positions them as essential players in the pursuit of inclusive and

sustainable economic growth, as evidenced by the diverse literature covered in the paper.

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