



Indigenizing the Co-operative Model

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The Research

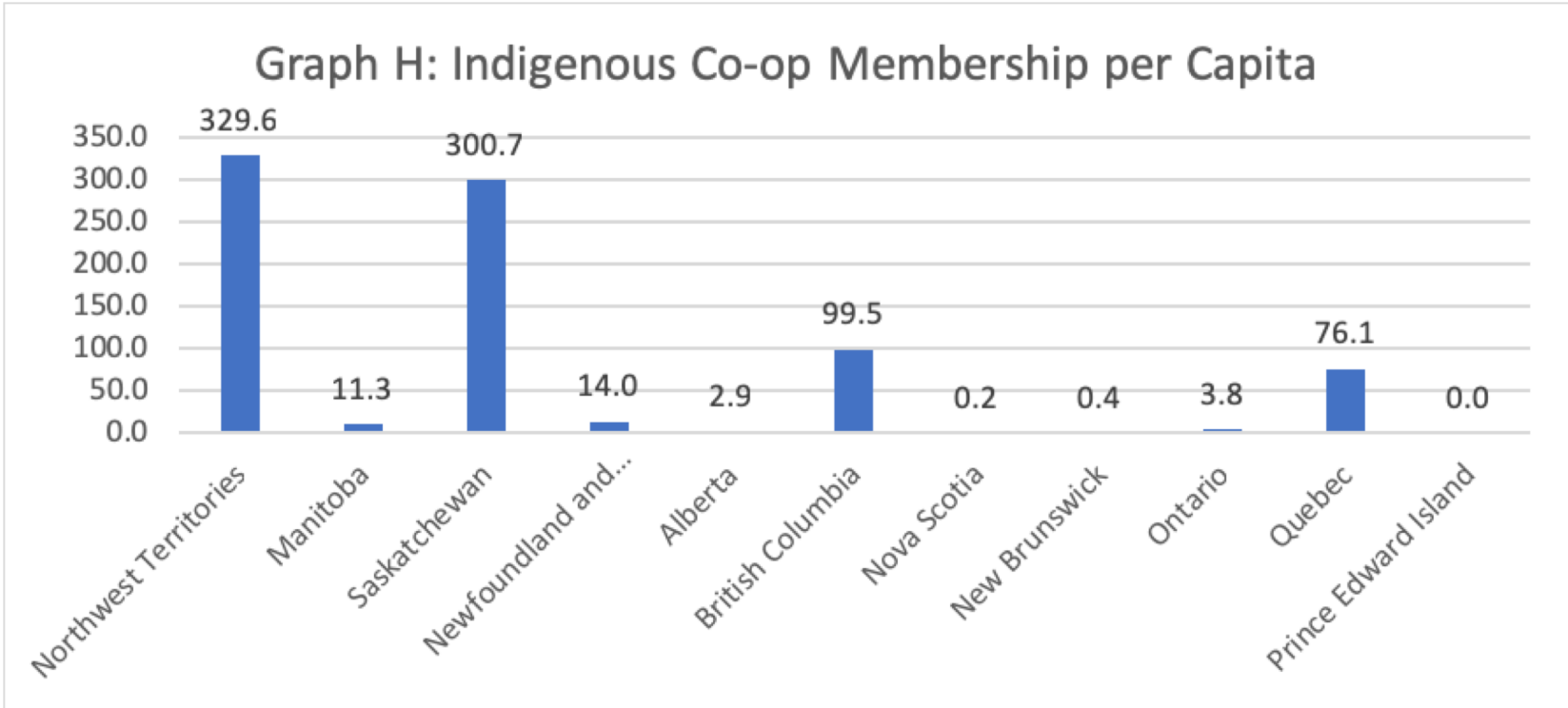
1. How might an Indigenized co-operative model influence the Indigenous communities in Winnipeg?
2. How does the co-operative model fit with Indigenous cultures?
3. How many and what types of co-operatives are currently organized in Indigenous communities?
4. Why are there not more Indigenous co-operatives in Winnipeg?
5. What might an Indigenized co-operative model look like?

Research Methods

- Lit Review
- Interviews
- Design Workshop
 - Indigenous participants conceptually designed a co-operative
 - Asked participants to think about their neighbourhood and some of the challenges they may work on
 - Participants planned their enterprise and incorporated Indigenous culture and values



Indigenous Co-op Membership per Capita



The 7 Principles and the 11 Neechi Principles

1. *Voluntary and open membership*
2. *Democratic member control*
3. *Financial or economic participation by members*
4. *Autonomy and independence*
5. *Education, training, information for members*
6. *Co-operation with other co-operatives*
7. *Concern for the community*

1. *Use of locally produced goods and services*
2. *Production of goods and services for local use*
3. *Local reinvestment of profits*
4. *Long-term employment of residents*
5. *Local skills development*
6. *Local decision-making*
7. *Public health*
8. *Physical environment*
9. *Neighbourhood stability*
10. *Human dignity*
11. *Support for other CED initiatives*

Indigenous Participation in Capitalist Economy

The Elements of Development Model (Salway Black, 1994) is a medicine wheel inspired framework that measures the success of economic development initiatives using 16 elements



Indigenous Determinants of Success as Compared to the Rochdale and Neechi Principles

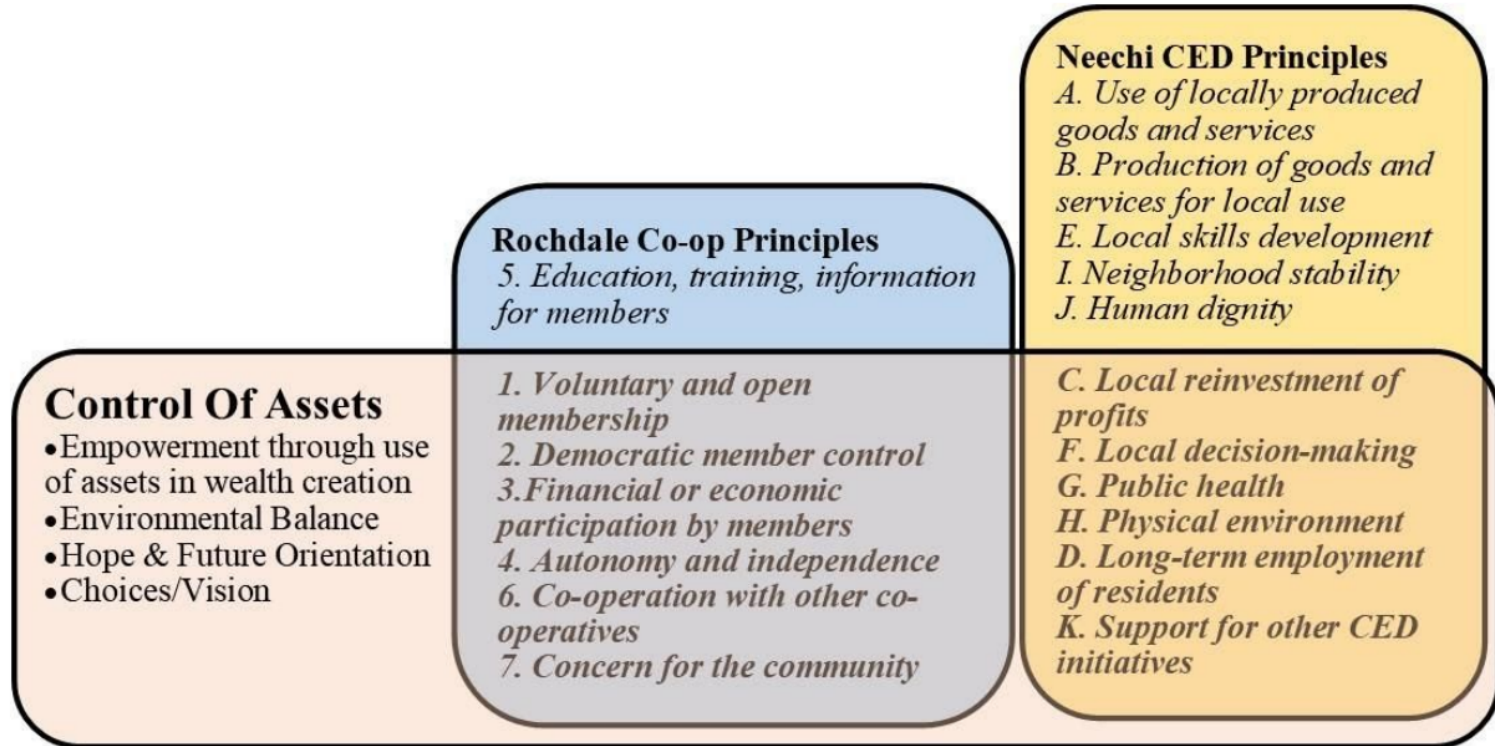


Diagram 1: Control of Assets

Indigenous Determinants of Success as Compared to the Rochdale and Neechi Principles

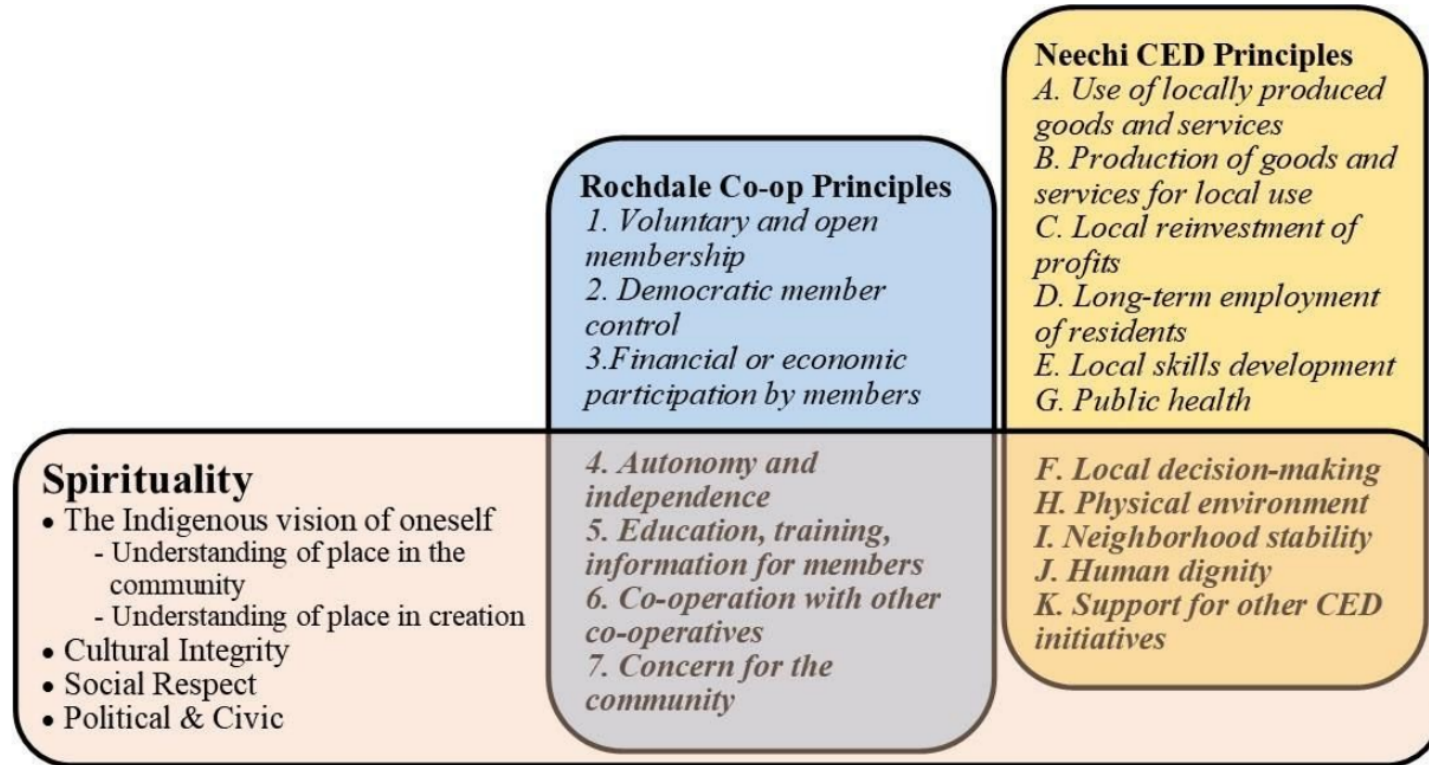


Diagram 2 Spirituality

Indigenous Determinants of Success as Compared to the Rochdale and Neechi Principles

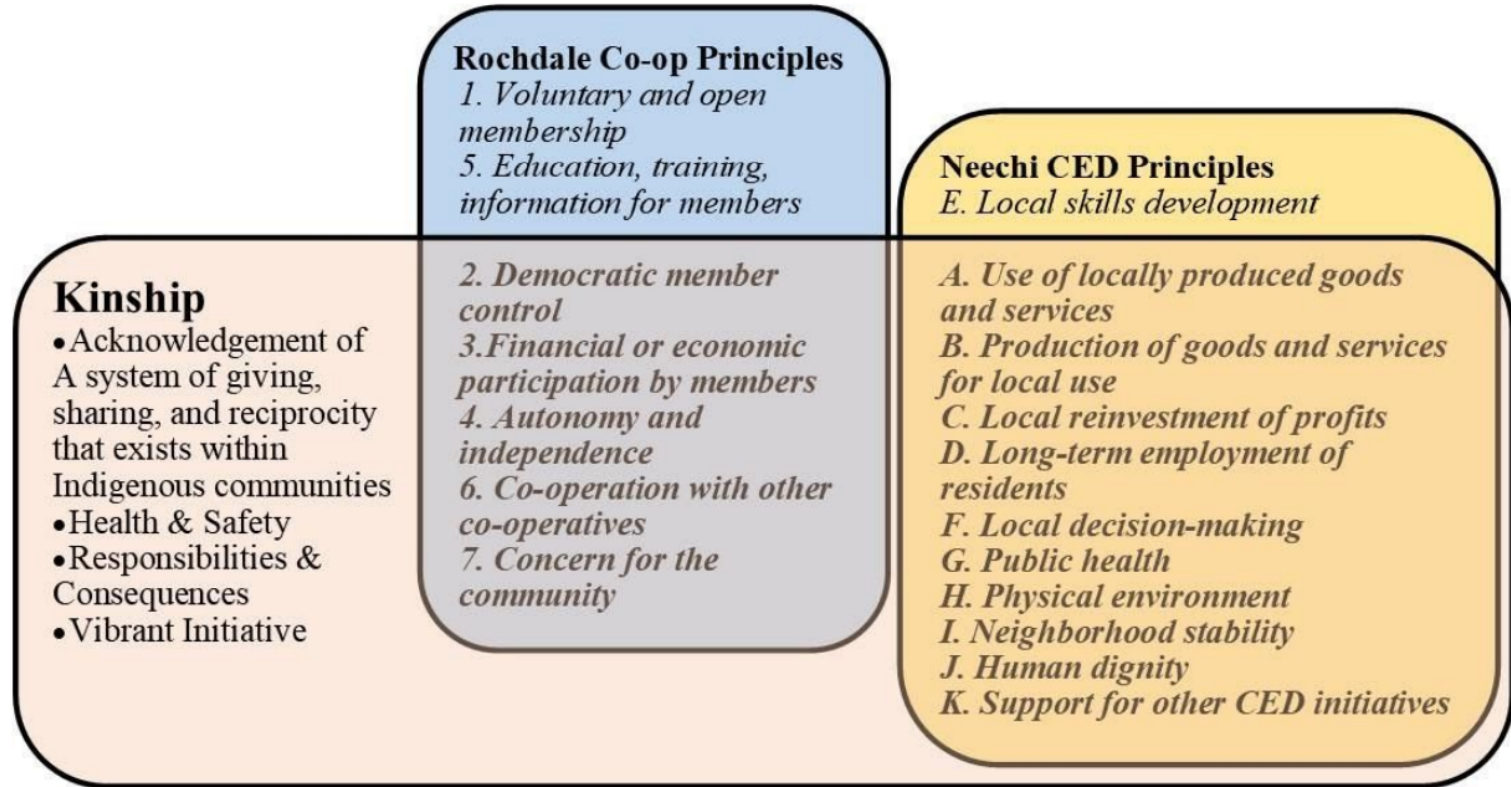


Diagram 3 Kinship

Indigenous Determinants of Success as Compared to the Rochdale and Neechi Principles

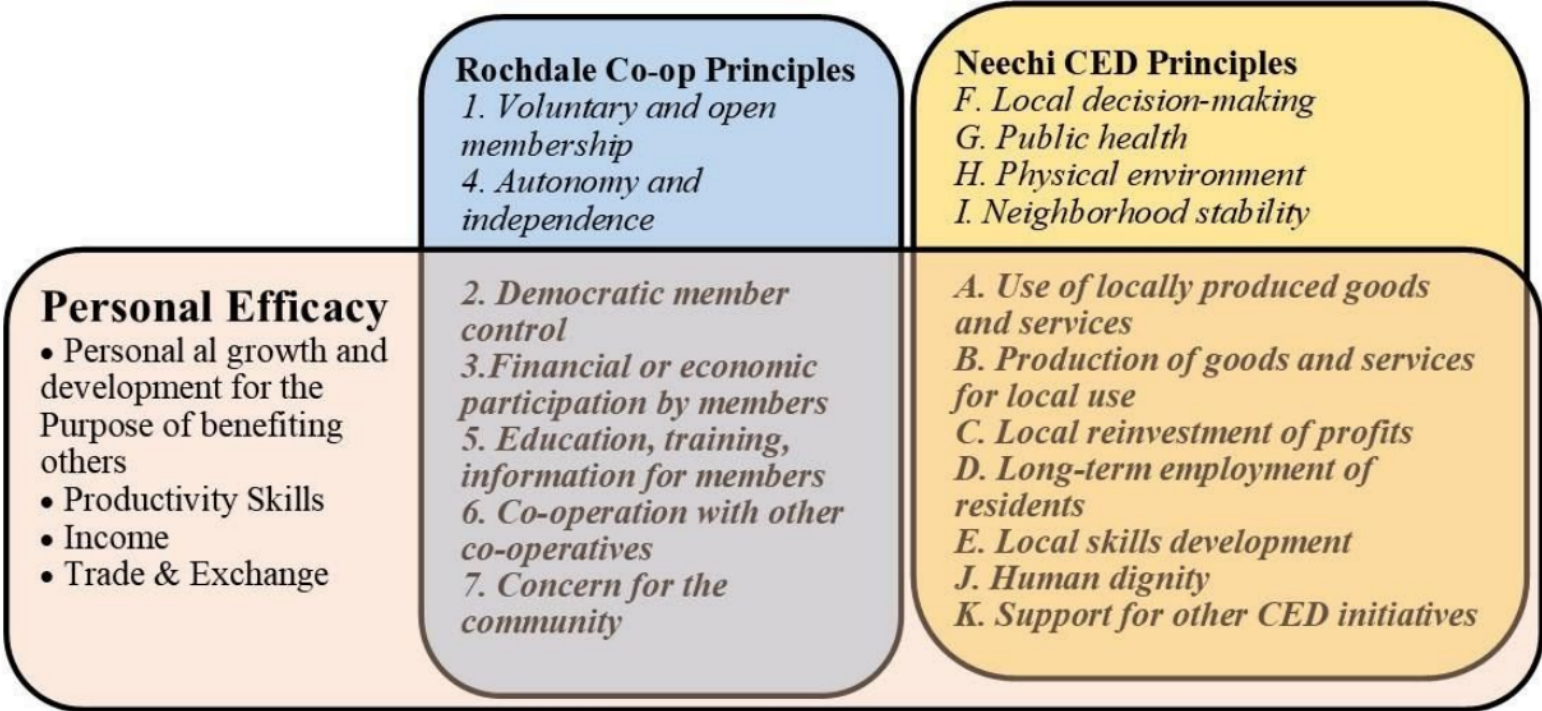


Diagram 4 Personal Efficacy

Overview of Findings

- The Co-operative may be a valuable option
 - Better longevity
 - Can mobilize the community to lend support
 - Plugs the leaky bucket - prevents “capital flight” and benefits from the “multiplier effect”
 - The model works well in circumstances and places where private sector cannot and will not service (e.g. Northern communities).
- Some limitations:
 - Familiarity with the cooperative model
 - Access to start-up capital
 - Current social factors in the community within and between members
 - Risk of failure - community investors may be affected

Alignment with Indigenous ways of finding solutions

- Community goals incorporated with the co-op operation - Neechi example
- “Village concept” - idea of acceptance equality, and community
- “Privilege Potlatch” - idea of sharing their blessings
- Leadership in the community - there was no lack of this and essential in creating a co-op

Conclusion

- The co-op model is not a magic bullet solution but it does provide advantages that are not found in other business models. It can create employment, service communities when other models aren't incentivised but there are still challenges to creating them.
- Indigenous Peoples will indigenize whatever model they use. However, there is a high potential for alignment between co-ops and Indigenous ideals, values, and cultures that may be reflected in how business is conducted
- The co-op model was originally created to provide autonomy and self-determination for the original users. This is why the co-op principles are a good fit in our current neocolonial context in Canada