Indigenizing the Cooperative Model

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The Research

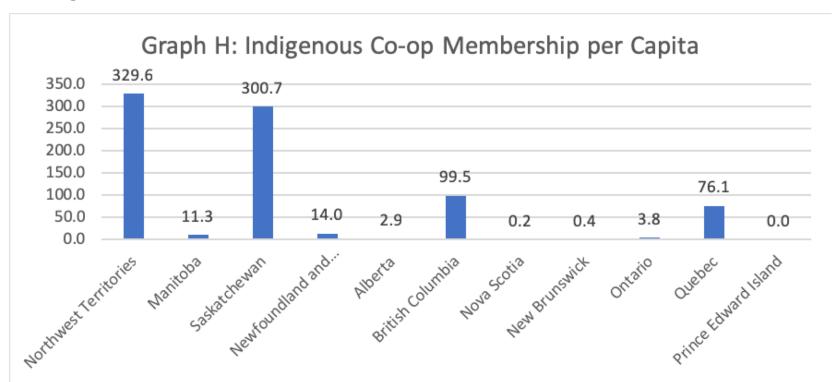
- 1. How might an Indigenized co-operative model influence the Indigenous communities in Winnipeg?
- 2. How does the co-operative model fit with Indigenous cultures?
- 3. How many and what types of co-operatives are currently organized in Indigenous communities?
- 4. Why are there not more Indigenous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



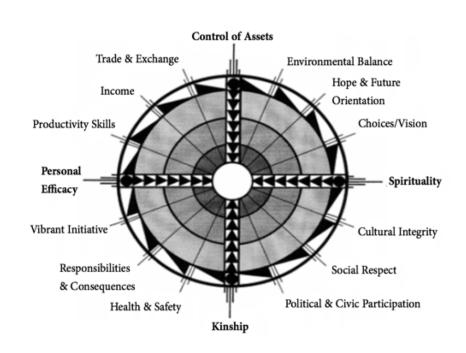
The 7 Principles and the 11 Neechi Principles

- Voluntary and open membership
- 2. Democratic member control
- 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

- Use of locally produced goods and services
- 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



Neechi CED Principles A. Use of locally produced goods and services B. Production of goods and services for local use E. Local skills development Rochdale Co-op Principles I. Neighborhood stability 5. Education, training, information J. Human dignity for members C. Local reinvestment of 1. Voluntary and open Control Of Assets profits membership • Empowerment through use F. Local decision-making 2. Democratic member control of assets in wealth creation G. Public health 3. Financial or economic Environmental Balance H. Physical environment participation by members • Hope & Future Orientation D. Long-term employment 4. Autonomy and independence Choices/Vision of residents 6. Co-operation with other co-K. Support for other CED operatives initiatives 7. Concern for the community

Diagram 1: Control of Assets

Rochdale Co-op Principles

- 1. Voluntary and open membership
- 2. Democratic member control
- 3. Financial or economic participation by members

goods R Pro

A. Use of locally produced goods and services

Neechi CED Principles

- B. Production of goods and services for local use
- C. Local reinvestment of profits
- D. Long-term employment of residents
- E. Local skills development
- G. Public health

Spirituality

- The Indigenous vision of oneself
 - Understanding of place in the community
 - Understanding of place in creation
- Cultural Integrity
- Social Respect
- · Political & Civic

- 4. Autonomy and independence
- 5. Education, training, information for members
- 6. Co-operation with other co-operatives
- 7. Concern for the community

- F. Local decision-making
- H. Physical environment
- I. Neighborhood stability
- J. Human dignity
- K. Support for other CED initiatives

Diagram 2 Spirituality

Rochdale Co-op Principles

- 1. Voluntary and open membership
- 5. Education, training, information for members

Kinship

- Acknowledgement of A system of giving, sharing, and reciprocity that exists within Indigenous communities
- Health & Safety
- Responsibilities & Consequences
- Vibrant Initiative

- 2. Democratic member control
- 3. Financial or economic participation by members
- 4. Autonomy and independence
- 6. Co-operation with other co-operatives
- 7. Concern for the community

Neechi CED Principles

E. Local skills development

- A. Use of locally produced goods and services
- B. Production of goods and services for local use
- C. Local reinvestment of profits
- D. Long-term employment of residents
- F. Local decision-making
- G. Public health
- H. Physical environment
- I. Neighborhood stability
- J. Human dignity
- K. Support for other CED initiatives

Diagram 3 Kinship

Rochdale Co-op Principles

- 1. Voluntary and open membership
- 4. Autonomy and independence

Personal Efficacy

- Personal al growth and development for the Purpose of benefiting others
- Productivity Skills
- Income
- Trade & Exchange

- 2. Democratic member control
- 3. Financial or economic participation by members
- 5. Education, training, information for members
- 6. Co-operation with other co-operatives
- 7. Concern for the community

Neechi CED Principles

- F. Local decision-making
- G. Public health
- H. Physical environment
- I. Neighborhood stability
- A. Use of locally produced goods and services
- B. Production of goods and services for local use
- C. Local reinvestment of profits
- D. Long-term employment of residents
- E. Local skills development
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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 selfdetermination for the original users. This is why the co-op principles are a good fit in our current neocolonial context in Canada