

The Cooperative Identity and International Cooperation: a study on the Brazil-Germany long term partnership.

This paper seeks to understand the cooperation among cooperatives in Brazil and Germany and its contribution to the expansion of credit unions in Brazil. Initiated in 1996 and still active, the cooperation among the German Confederation of Cooperatives (DGRV) and the Organization of Brazilian Cooperatives has paved the way for a substantial change on the number of credit unions in Brazil.

The main goal of this study is to demonstrate the attributes of success on the knowledge transfer between the two apex organizations. We try to demonstrate how the Cooperative Principles influenced the absorptive and disseminative capacities of both organizations within the 25 years long partnership.

According to Tang (2011), in a knowledge transfer process, sender and recipient organizations have equally important roles for an effective knowledge transfer. Not only must the receiving organization have acquired skills to access and assimilate the knowledge transferred through the partnership, but also the sender organization must have the ability to codify and communicate the knowledge so that it can be correctly received by the partnership.

In fact, the Cooperative Doctrine incentivizes the partnerships among two or more cooperatives. The 6th Cooperative Principle established by the International Cooperative Alliance encourages cooperatives the cooperation among cooperatives to access markets and to promote knowledge transfer.

Furthermore, the study intends to collaborate with research on knowledge transfer through international cooperation between private enterprises which are not economically or commercially linked.

It is intention of this study to contribute to the research on the cooperative businesses model and its engagement in international cooperation to acquire knowledge. It is also intended to identify the attributes necessary for cooperatives to be able to assimilate and implement knowledge acquired through cooperation with cooperatives in other countries.