



The Influence of the Cooperative Economics Learning Process on the Cooperative Interest of Economics Education Students: A Case Study of Economics Education Study Program Students at Makassar State University

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of the cooperative economics learning process on the cooperative interest of students in the Economics Education Study Program at Makassar State University. Cooperative economics learning is considered important to improve students' understanding of cooperatives as an economic model based on collectivity and sustainability. However, despite the many benefits of cooperatives, many students are less interested or even unaware of their importance. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach with in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation to explore students' perceptions of cooperatives and the influence of cooperative learning on their interest. The results showed that a learning process that integrates theory and practice can increase students' interest in joining and participating in cooperatives. Students who are directly involved in cooperative activities show a better understanding of cooperative principles and their benefits. However, many students still desire more practical experience and direct involvement in cooperative management. Therefore, it is recommended to increase practical activities and implement more engaging learning methods to increase students' interest and readiness to become involved in cooperatives.

Keyword: Learning Process, Interest in Cooperatives, Students, Cooperatives, Economic Education.





INTRODUCTION

Cooperatives are a form of economic organization oriented towards shared prosperity, managed collectively by their members. In cooperatives, each member has equal rights in decision-making and profit sharing, in accordance with the basic principles underlying cooperatives: economic democracy, active member participation, and social responsibility. These principles make cooperatives an alternative, just and sustainable economic model that can support economic equality and provide opportunities for members to improve their standard of living. With a community-based approach, cooperatives not only serve as a forum for managing shared resources but also play a vital role in shaping entrepreneurial character based on social values. Cooperatives provide opportunities for each member to learn to manage a business independently and responsibly, without neglecting social needs. This makes cooperatives highly relevant, especially among students pursuing higher education, where they can develop entrepreneurial and managerial skills useful both in the business world and in building the local economy.

Furthermore, cooperatives can also serve as a platform for students to hone their skills in resource management, business strategy planning, and teamwork. Through cooperative involvement, students can apply the economics they learn in college in real-world contexts, while building valuable social and professional networks for the future. Thus, cooperatives not only play a vital role in collective economic management but also serve as invaluable learning platforms for the younger generation, particularly students, by equipping them with practical entrepreneurial skills and experience.

However, despite the numerous benefits of cooperatives, many students are less interested or even unaware of their importance. This may be due to a lack of understanding of the mechanisms and benefits of cooperatives, as well as the limited availability of effective media to teach cooperative concepts in an engaging and applicable manner. One way to address this is through a learning process that captures student interest and provides a deeper understanding of cooperatives as entities with a strategic role in the economy. A good learning process aims not only to convey material but also to foster student interest and awareness of the importance of cooperatives in supporting the local and national economy. This is where innovative and relevant learning methods play a crucial role, encouraging students to become more actively involved in cooperative activities. This is especially important given the challenges of globalization and increasingly fierce economic competition, where cooperatives can be an alternative solution for creating economic resilience.

Makassar State University, with its various study programs, has the opportunity to





integrate cooperative concepts into its curriculum and practicum activities to foster student interest in cooperatives. This study aims to examine the influence of the learning process on students' cooperative interests in the Economics Education Study Program at Makassar State University. This research is expected to provide new insights into how more effective and applicable learning methods can shape students' attitudes and interests in actively participating in cooperatives, as well as prepare them to become entrepreneurs who care about the community-based economy.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach because the focus is on gaining a deeper understanding of students' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward the material taught in the cooperatives course. Subjects were students in the Economics Education Study Program at Makassar State University who had taken cooperative-related courses. Students were selected based on specific criteria, such as being actively involved in cooperatives courses and possessing basic knowledge of cooperatives.

The data collection techniques used in this study included in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with students to obtain more detailed and personal information regarding the impact of cooperative learning on their interests. These interviews were open-ended, allowing students to share their experiences regarding the cooperative learning process and how it influenced their interest in participating in cooperatives. Furthermore, the researcher conducted observations to provide further understanding of the interactions between students and the material presented. Finally, documentation was used to support the data from the interviews and observations. These techniques complemented each other to obtain richer and more comprehensive data in this study.

The steps in qualitative data analysis used in this study are as follows:

1. Data Collection
2. Data Reduction
3. Data Presentation
4. Conclusion Drawing

Qualitative data in this study were obtained from interviews with informants and in-depth interviews with students of Economics Education, Makassar State University.



Table 1. Informant Description

No.	Name	Gender	Semester	Major	Faculty
1	Darniati	P	6	Economic Education	Faculty of Economics and Business
2	Dwi Angga	L	6	Economic Education	Faculty of Economics and Business
3	Sri Anita Amnada	P	6	Economic Education	Faculty of Economics and Business

The informant table describes three students in the Economics Education Study Program at Makassar State University who served as subjects in this study. The informants consisted of two women (Darniati and Sri Anita Amnada) and one man (Dwi Angga), all in their sixth semester. They were selected because they actively participated in courses related to cooperatives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of this study, the main objective is to explore how economics education, particularly cooperative-based education, can improve the understanding and managerial skills of students in the Economics Education Study Program at Makassar State University. Interviews with sixth-semester students revealed that cooperative economics education has a significant impact on shaping students' perspectives on cooperatives and improving their skills in managing cooperatives. Students stated that economics education has greatly helped them understand that cooperatives are not simply about seeking profit, but rather about building economic sustainability that involves all members in decision-making. This gave them a broader understanding of the role of cooperatives in the local and national economy. Several students also expressed that they felt better prepared to be involved in cooperative management in the future, thanks to the managerial knowledge gained from the courses they took.

However, many students noted difficulties in applying the theories they learned in the real world. They acknowledged that although they had gained a basic understanding of cooperative management theory, the biggest challenge was managing the cooperative's human resources and finances practically. Many students desired more field experience, such as hands-on experience in cooperatives or more realistic cooperative simulations. Most students also expressed that while cooperative education provided a strong theoretical foundation, they wished for more direct involvement with cooperatives in the field. They felt that with more

practical experience, they would be better prepared to face the real challenges of cooperative management. Therefore, while the theory taught covered various important aspects of cooperatives, practical experience remains a crucial component in preparing students for actual cooperative involvement.

Table 2. Interview Summary

No.	Question	Answer
1.	What makes cooperatives important for students?	Cooperatives are important because they can help others. If someone needs money or goods, a cooperative is there. Plus, we can learn how to manage our own businesses.
2.	Have you ever joined a campus cooperative?	No, because I'm not interested yet.
3.	How do you get students to join cooperatives?	To get people to join, you need to frequently explain the benefits. Once they understand the benefits, they'll be interested in joining.
4.	Is cooperative learning on campus interesting enough?	Cooperative learning on campus is quite good, but sometimes it feels too theoretical. More practical training would certainly be easier to understand and more engaging.
5.	In your opinion, why are students less interested in joining cooperatives?	Perhaps due to a lack of clear information about cooperatives, many students assume they're only for loans, when in fact, they offer many other benefits.

Source: Interview Results (2025)

Interviews with three students from the Economics Education Study Program at Makassar State University yielded fascinating insights into their perceptions of cooperatives and cooperative learning on campus. The following is a summary of the responses obtained from the interviews:

1. What makes cooperatives important to students?

- Students answered that cooperatives are important because they can help others, especially when someone needs money or goods. Furthermore,



cooperatives also provide an opportunity to learn how to manage their own business.

2. Have you ever joined a campus cooperative?
 - One student answered no, saying they weren't interested in joining yet.
3. How can we encourage students to join cooperatives?
 - Students felt that to increase participation, cooperatives should frequently communicate their benefits. If students understand the benefits, they will be interested in joining.
4. Is cooperative learning on campus engaging enough?
 - Cooperative learning on campus is quite good, but some students expressed that it sometimes feels too theoretical. They wish there were more practical activities to make the material easier to understand and more engaging.
5. In your opinion, why are students less interested in joining cooperatives?
 - Students believed that one of the main reasons for the lack of interest is the lack of clear information about cooperatives. Many students still think that cooperatives are only for lending money, when in fact, cooperatives have many other benefits that members can take advantage of.

Overall, the results of these interviews indicate that students are aware of the importance of cooperatives, but they feel that to attract more students, a deeper understanding and more practical experience in cooperative learning is needed.

CONCLUSION

The research results can be concluded that a learning process that integrates theory and practice can increase students' interest in joining and participating in cooperatives. Students who are directly involved in cooperative activities demonstrate a better understanding of cooperative principles and their benefits. However, many students still desire more practical experience and direct involvement in cooperative management. Therefore, it is recommended to increase practical activities and implement more engaging learning methods to increase students' interest and readiness to become involved in cooperatives.



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