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## Cooperative Societies and Socio-Economic Development of Delta State: A Study of Selected Cooperatives in Aniocha South LGA, Delta State, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The research entitled "Cooperative Societies and Socio-Economic Development of Delta State: A Study of Selected Cooperatives in Aniocha South LGA, Delta State", was intended to verify the role of cooperative societies in socio-economic development with reference to selected cooperatives in the above named LGA. The research questions revolve on the potency of cooperatives to reduce poverty, enhance standard of living, create jobs and empower the rural populace economically. The population of the study comprises the members of selected cooperative societies in the local government area, which was given as 87 and all were studied based on the manageability. Data for the study were generated with close ended questionnaire designed for the study. *Chi-square* ( $x^2$ ) statistical tool was used to test the hypothesis of the study. It was found that cooperative societies result in poverty reduction, improved standard of living, resulted in job creation, and improved the economic empowerment of the rural populace under study. The first three sub-constraints were validated by the hypothesis tested by the last shows that statistically, there is no significance relationship between cooperative societies and economic empowerment of the rural area studied. It was recommended that government promote the establishment and encouragement of cooperatives among the people to ensure improved standard of living in these areas; among others.

**Keywords:** Predicting Fake News Using Long Short-Term Memory Algorithm

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Many nations are faced with the challenge of attainment of socio-economic development for a wide spectrum of their populace who are faced with poor living standard. No nation can be described as development or be given the respect in the comity of nations where a good number of her population are faced with poor social and economic conditions.

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One of the strategies adopted by many nations to address the problem of social and economic problems among their populace is cooperative societies. They promote and encourage the formation of this voluntary and democratic organization among the citizenry in attempt to lift many from poor standard of living. Levin (2004) states that cooperative societies contribute to sustainable human development and have an important role to play in combating social exclusion; thus promote and in fact a pillar of national and international economic and social development. A country is considered developed if its populace have positive development indicators. No wonder third world countries are said to be either developing or under-developed. Economic backwardness poses great danger to the development of a nation as it is associated with such negative phenomenon as poverty, malnutrition's, ignorance, poor infrastructural facilities, restive youth, among other socio-economic ills.

As Lyere (2004) puts it, the problem of rural development are complex, multi-sectional multi-dimensional. To tackle these problems successful administrations, military or civilian, have been proffering various formidable solutions towards accelerating the problem of these rural dwellers in order to attain these enviable status of developed countries. To tackle the problem successfully, the Nigeria Government in 2008 adopted cooperative as a strategy for economic and rural transformation thus the Cooperative Decree was promulgated in 2008 by General Ibrahim Babangida on the 26th day of August (Berko, 2015). It has therefore been observed that one of the various strategies devised by government in Nigeria to tackle poverty which predominant in the rural areas, is cooperative society (Olaleye, 2004).

Cooperative society as a business is voluntarily owned and controlled by its members and aids in redistribution of income and wealth, harmonize interest and members economic and social development. According to Berko (2015) as opined in Lyere (2008), cooperatives has been found as the most appropriate avenues for rural mobilization and organization. This study therefore is embarked upon to assess the strategy with particular reference to Aniocha South Local Government Area, Delta State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Nigeria, cooperative provide locally needed services, employment, circulate money locally and contribute to a sense of community of social cohesion (Dogarawa, 2010). Cooperative movement is considered a viable option for alleviating poverty due to its peculiarity compared with other forms of business organization. It engenders equal maximum utility, effective participation and these made the members to be empowered, economically. Since 1935, when the cooperative societies in various forms and compositions have been functioning in Nigeria, the objectives of these cooperatives have been the advancement of standard of living or meeting the socio-economic needs of the numbers. Another fact is that poverty basically appreciated at the individual level has remained in Nigeria manifesting in the inability of the people to meet their basic needs like foods, shelter, healthcare, education and so on.

### Objectives of the Study

This study intends to verify the effects of cooperative societies in the socio-economic development of Delta State.

The specific objectives includes;

1. To ascertain the extent to which cooperative societies has brought about poverty reduction.
2. To ascertain the relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society.
3. **To ascertain the relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society**

### Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide this study;

1. To what extent do cooperative societies bring about poverty reduction?
2. Does cooperative societies improve standard of living of the populace?
3. Is there relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society?

### Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis have been formulated to guide this study.

H<sub>01</sub>: Cooperative societies have not resulted in poverty reduction in the society.

H<sub>02</sub>: Cooperative societies does not improve standard of living of the populace.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.0 Conceptual Framework

#### 2.1 The Concept of Cooperative Society

According to Franz (1996) universal definition of a cooperative society is hard as a result of flexibility of its organization which adapts itself to a variety of purpose and widely diverging economic and social system. A cooperative society is a voluntary association that started with the aim of the service of its members. ILO (2013) sees cooperative societies as association of persons, usually of limited means who have voluntarily joined together to achieve a common economic and through the formation of a democratically business organization, making an equitable contribution of the capital required and accepting a fair share risk and benefit of the undertaking. Berko (1987) asserts that cooperative society is an association having legal existence formed by persons of modest means in order to promote and develop, according to the principles of mutually the exercise of the occupations and the improvement of their economic condition.

The International Cooperate Alliance (ICA) defined cooperative society as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs aspiration through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise (Ahamalu and Ebue, 2006). This simply portrays cooperative as a business organization formed to take care of the economic need of its members. Finally on this issue, Franz (1996) puts the definition to make common denominator as a voluntary organization of economic unit based on equality, carrying out an allocated or self given economic objective. His opinion implies that cooperative society is in this nature neither capitalistic nor socialistic but neutral means of the organization which can serve various aims in economic system and democratically controlled enterprise. A cooperative society is

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an autonomous body in the sense that it is free from governmental and external control and domination. Members join voluntarily as a result of having acquired a new awareness through education to the benefits of cooperation. It is association of persons not capital i.e the interest of the members is the priority.

### **2.1.2 Importance of Cooperative in Rural Development**

The federal government has in the past taken some steps to implement the development of our rural areas through the use of community centers and local governments.

There is every need that there is cooperative movement in rural areas. This will help in the provision of social amenities, which will help transform the standard of rural living. Specifically;

- Cooperative enables the rural dwellers to participate fully in the activities of success organization where they have equal right to contribute their own ideas then in those other organizations where some members dominate.
- Cooperative is essential in rural areas because it helps them to change their beliefs, cultural norms against innovation and techniques of modern farming or business.
- It helps to educate the rural people through cooperative seminars, workshops and symposia.
- Cooperative society creates room for independence as many rural men and women can now embark on production or marketing of goods which is a source of income.
- It increases their sales volume, production, capacity and high savings.

### **2.1.3 Development of Cooperatives in Nigeria**

The development of cooperative societies in Nigeria date back to 1904. This development shall be looked at from the perspective.

- i. The Pre-Ordinance Era
- ii. The Ordinance Era and
- iii. The Present Day Cooperatives Era (1986)

Prior to the promulgation of cooperative ordinance in 1935, there were sense of cooperative activities in Nigeria. The first form of association that united farmers in Nigeria was the Agege Planters Union, which came into being on 5th July, 1904 (Adedeye, 1996). The union had its major objectives, the provision of credit facilities to members, the spread of knowledge on how to improve the quality of food and improvement of roads to facilitate the transportation of farm products to buying centres. The growth of cooperatives in Nigeria during the era was masterminded by the government. According to Ana (1986), the government of Nigeria after the demise of resistant of the Agege Group, decide to model cooperatives as established by the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers.

In this regard, Mr. F. Strickland, who was formerly the registrar of India Cooperative Societies, was asked to explore the possibilities of establishing cooperative societies in Nigeria. His findings "Report" on the introduction of cooperative societies in Nigeria which he submitted in 1936, later led to the promulgation of the first cooperative law for Nigeria in 1956. The present development of cooperative societies in Nigeria is quite interesting just like a seed long transplanted from the nursery stage, cooperative societies have really developed to a mature stage in nations with

agencies like the Nigeria Agricultural and Cooperatives Bank (NACABO, Cooperative Federation, Cooperative Press, commissioned at Ibadan in 1961.

#### **2.1.4 Major Types of Cooperative Societies**

There are several types of cooperative societies among which are the following:

##### **1. Agricultural Cooperative Societies:**

Agricultural cooperative societies as the name implies are concerned with development of agricultural through pooling of land together, distribution of agricultural products, supply of farming inputs, improved variety of seedlings, pesticide, agricultural advice and so on. All these are meant to solve the agricultural problems of members & enhance their agricultural productivity.

##### **2. Consumers Cooperative Societies:**

This is a form of traders cooperative society which engages in the distribution & marketing of finished products mainly to their members at fair prices. The consumers cooperative societies buy finished goods directly from their manufacturers through this method the cooperative is able to save cost and then sells directly to members at cheaper rates than what obtains in the open market.

##### **3. Producers Cooperative Societies:**

This type of cooperative society involves the coming together of independent producers to produce a commodity. They elect some members to carry out the management of the enterprises. The profit realized from the business is shared among the cooperative producers. Example of producers cooperative societies include Carvers Cooperative and Wenvers Cooperatives.

##### **4. Housing/Building Cooperative Societies:**

This is a type of cooperative societies with the aim of ownership of building. Joint acquisition of houses, building materials and mortgage/credit lending to members at reduced interest rates.

##### **5. Industrial Cooperative Societies:**

Industrial cooperative society is a collection of people who engage in small and medium scale production. They are usually agro-allied based, agricultural inputs, block molding, metal construction etc.

##### **6. Thrift and Credit Cooperative Societies:**

Thrift & credit cooperative societies consist of persons who undertake regular savings of part of their earnings and lend such to members at interest rates lower than could be obtained outside the cooperative. This type of cooperative is common among workers, market women, community association union and even village meetings.

#### **2.1.5 The Concept of Economic Development**

This is a process of improvement in the general welfare of the society. It is usually manifested in desirable changes in the various aspects of the life of the society (Co-Sululia and Sheffrin, 2015). Economic system that will improve the standard of living through efficient utilization of resources

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to the provision of based infrastructure, increased productivity and income levels of all groups in the society.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on cooperative theory. The theory was first introduced by Trevor Swan and Rebert Solow in 1986. It outlines how a steady economic growth rate results from a combination of efforts of individuals in a community with common purpose and mutual benefits. Cooperative theorists ascribed the objectives of cooperatives to include the maximization of members welfare, maximization of cost. Each of these objectives requires as separate analysis and conclusions about. The theory presented here marginal analysis to drive conclusion about the economic behaviour of cooperatives. The study of cooperatives theory is useful because it provides students with knowledge about the expected behaviour of cooperative in various market situations and the difference between the behaviour the of cooperative and others. Because the theoretical analysis of cooperative objectives, the study of cooperative theory also offers students insight into the economic implications of a cooperative choice objectives. In addition, the study of cooperative theory produce some bases on the expected impact of cooperatives on the economic performance of imperfect market.

## 2.3 Empirical Review

Sanjor (2012) and Adesina (2018) opines that cooperative societies serves as engines of social integration and cohesion in the face of inequalities in social capabilities by empowering and giving voice to the poor and the needy as well as the marginalized groups; any by promoting the organization of federation and alliances. In addition, these organizations play important roles in the global economy as well as in the fostering of peace building among human communities and nations of the world (William, 2018). Osaige (2016), is of the view that the cooperative of properly organized can facilitate the distribution of goods to all parts of the country at affordable prices.

In Nigeria, he argues that parts of the goods imported by the Nigerian National Supply Company (NNSC), distributed through consumer cooperatives. In addition, the cooperative provides avenue through which the masses may be involved in the production of goods and services. The participation of the masses in the economy of their country, Osagie argues should lead to social peace and harmony. In other words, the involvement of a reasonable larger proportions of the Nigeria business cadre in the equitable distribution of goods and services through the agencies of cooperative organizations should go a long way in ensuring hope, trust, confidence, justice and security within the Nigeria populace or society. According to Tairnai (2017) combating exploitation, reducing disparities, improving social conditions and gender sensitivity and helping to create a more just society with pronounced concern for environmental protections and sustainable processes of development all tend to make a cooperative a preferred and more socially desirable form of organization.

Helmberger (2014) argues that an important factor in determining the existence of the yardstick effect was the cooperative membership policy. It faced with downward stopping demand functions or increased average processing costs, only an open-membership cooperative could be expected to exert a positive effect on competition. In fact, Helmberger concluded that a closed-membership

cooperative could produce "socially undesirable" market performance by restricting output to a level less than that associated with a profit-maximizing monoposony.

Ijere (1985) in a twelve year study carried out on Owena Cooperative Consumer Shop Ltd. Igwebuike Ofuocha Rice Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative Society Industry made some interesting discoveries. The study evaluated the societies in terms of the objectives they set out for themselves. Creation of employment, production of more food for people, procurement and distribution of essential commodities, making better use of local resources and raising the income of members. It was discovered that the six types of cooperative societies is determined the extent of employment opportunity could create for the people of such a community.

Thus, a large cooperative business will generate more employment opportunities for a relatively smaller cooperative business. He also discovered that cooperative sector rose from 5th place among the economic sectors offering employment in 1996 to the second place in 1978. This is a clear indication of the importance of cooperative societies in terms of employment generation in Nigeria. Ijere also suggested that the constant supply of inputs facilities or transportation and marketing office & effective management of harvest would enhance the employment generation ability of cooperatives thereby reducing poverty level.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher used descriptive research design methodology. The design is preferred because it is concerned with answering questions such as who, what, which, how, when and how much. The research used target population of 80 staff of a Selected Cooperatives in Aniocha South LGA, Delta State. The whole population was conceded for the data analyses because of its little nature. This research used questionnaire to collect data from respondents which were used for analysis. The data collected was analyzed using the sample percentage method and chi-square to test the hypothesis. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources whereby questionnaires and literature review were done respectively so as to get detailed information

### 4. RESULT AND DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, we discuss the result and present our data analysis  
Research Question 1: Is there significant relationship between environment and business organizations?

#### 4.1 Cooperative Societies and Poverty Reduction

The first research question of the study is on the extent to which cooperative societies has brought about poverty reduction in the society. This was also contained in questionnaires and the answers of the respondents are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Cooperative Societies and Poverty Reduction**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	23	28.75
Agreed	29	36.25
Undecided	8	10
Disagreed	15	18.75
Strongly Disagreed	5	6.25
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 above shows that 23 (28.75%) of the respondents Strongly Agreed, and 29 (36.25%) Agreed, which constitute the majority that cooperative societies has brought about poverty reduction in the society, while 8 (10%) were Undecided, 15 (18.75%) Disagreed and 5 (6.25%) Strongly Disagreed to this view.

#### 4.2 Cooperative Societies and Improve Standard of Living

The second research question of the study is on whether if cooperative societies improve standard of living of the people and the outcome is shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Cooperative Societies and Improve Standard of Living**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	3	3.75
Agreed	59	73.75
Undecided	7	8.75
Disagreed	6	7.5
Strongly Disagreed	5	6.25
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The above shows that 3 (3.75%) of the respondents Strongly Agreed and 59 (73.57%) Agreed which constitute the majority, that cooperative societies improve standard of living of the rural populace, while 7 (8.75%) were Undecided, 6 (7.5%) Disagreed and 5 (6.25%) Strongly Disagreed to this position.

#### 4.3 Cooperative Societies and Job Creation

The third research question of the study is on the relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society. The answers of the respondents as contained in the questionnaire are shown in Table 3 below;



**Table3: Cooperative Societies and Job Creation**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agreed	42	52.5
Agreed	26	32.5
Undecided	2	2.5
Disagreed	-	-
Strongly Disagreed	10	12.5
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 above shows that 42 (52.5%) of the respondents which constitutes the majority Strongly Agreed and 26 (32.5%) Agreed that cooperative societies facilitates job creation in rural areas while 2 (2.5%) were Undecided, none was captured on Disagreed and 10 (12.5%) Strongly disagreed to this opinion.

#### 4.4 Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis formulated for this study are hereby tested using *chi-square* statistical tool which formula is

$$x^2 = \frac{\sum (fo - fe)^2}{fe}$$

where  $x^2 =$  chi - square

$fo =$  observed frequency

$fe =$  expected frequency

$\sum =$  Summation

$$\text{Degree of freedom (df)} = (c - 1)(r - 1)$$

$$= (5 - 1)(2 - 1)$$

$$= 4 \times 1 = 4$$

$$\text{Level of significance} = 0.05$$

**Decision Rule:** Reject ( $H_0$ ) and accept ( $H_1$ ) if critical/table value is less than calculated value if otherwise, the reverse.

##### 4.4.1 Hypothesis 1

$H_{01}$ : Cooperative societies have not resulted in poverty reduction in the society.

$H_1$ : Cooperative societies have resulted in poverty reduction in the society.

**Table 1: Relationship between Cooperative Societies and Poverty Reduction**

Response	$fo$	$fe$	$fo - fe$	$(fo - fe)^2$	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$

Strongly Agreed	23	16	7	49	3.06
Agreed	29	16	13	169	10.56
Undecided	8	16	-8	64	4
Disagreed	15	16	-1	1	0.06
Strongly Disagreed	5	16	-11	121	7.56
Total	80	80	0	404	25.25

Source: Field Survey, 2024

**Decision Rule:**

Since the calculated value (25.25) is greater than the critical/table value (9.49) we reject  $H_0$  and accept  $H_1$ : cooperative societies have resulted in poverty reduction in the society.

**4.4.2 Hypothesis 2**

$H_{02}$ : Cooperative societies does not improve standard of living of the populace.

$H_2$ : Cooperative societies improves standard living of the populace.

**Table 2: Relationship between Cooperative Societies and Standard of Living of the Populace**

Response	$f_o$	$f_e$	$f_o - f_e$	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	$\frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$
Strongly Agreed	3	16	-13	169	10.56
Agreed	59	16	43	1849	115.56
Undecided	7	16	-9	81	5.06
Disagreed	6	16	-10	100	6.26
Strongly Disagreed	5	16	-11	121	7.56
Total	80	80	0	2,207.84	137.99

Source: Field Survey, 2023

**Decision Rule:**

Since the calculated value (137.99) is greater than the critical/table value (9.49) we reject  $H_0$  and accept  $H_1$ : cooperative societies improve standard of living of the populace.

**4.4.3 Hypothesis 3**

$H_{02}$ : There is no relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society.

$H_2$ : There is relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society.

**Table3: Relationship between Cooperative Societies and Job Creation**

Response	$f_o$	$f_e$	$f_o - f_e$	$(f_o - f_e)^2$	$\frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$
Strongly Agreed	42	16	26	67.6	42.25
Agreed	26	16	10	100	6.25
Undecided	2	16	-14	196	12.25
Disagreed	-	16	-16	256	16
Strongly Disagreed	10	16	-6	36	2.25
Total	80	80	0	1,264	79

Source: Field Survey, 2024

**Decision Rule:**

Since the calculated value (79) is greater than the critical/table value (9.49) we reject  $H_0$  and accept  $H_1$ : There is relationship between cooperative societies and job creation in the society.

**5 .DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The foregoing analysis led the following findings.

It was found that cooperative societies result in poverty reduction (Table 1); improve standard of living (Table 2); resulted in job creation (Table 7); and improve the economic empowerment (Table 3) of the rural populace under study. In the same vein, given *chi-square* ( $x^2$ ) calculated values of 25.25 for  $H_{01}$ , 137.99 for  $H_{02}$  and 79 for  $H_{03}$ ; each greater than the critical value of 9.49 at 0.05 significance level. Cooperative societies have been relevant in the area studied in terms of poverty reduction, improved standard of living and job creation with a low side in economic empowerment of the people.

**5.1 Conclusion**

Cooperative movement have generally been an effective tool for social and economic development. This research clearly revealed that cooperatives are vehicle for poverty reduction, improved standard of living and job creation in the society. It is therefore concluded that cooperative societies is strategy for addressing the widespread and deep-seated social and economic deprivations and lack that have characterized the conditions of many Nigerians.

**5.2 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made;

1. Government through its micro-credit agencies should give more attention to the cooperative societies in form of provision of financial support and soft loans which they can further distribute among their members.
2. Government should embark on public enlightenment and sensitization on the efficiency of cooperative to reduce the level of poverty in the rural area.
3. There is need for government to promote the establishment and encouragement of cooperatives among rural dwellers to ensure improved standard of living in these area.

4. Cooperative education should be included in the educational curriculum from junior secondary level to the tertiary level in order to introduce the students at their younger age and instil in them the tenets of cooperatives.

#### 5.4 Suggested Area for Further Study

Cooperative as a viable means for social and economic development is concern of this study that needs to be critically and effectively looked into. A research of this nature cannot be exhaustive or cover all issues on the subject matter. It is therefore suggested that further studies be carried out on how to make the cooperative movement effective means of social and economic development particularly among the rural populace that poverty and poor standard of living define their very condition.

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