



Society for Co-operative  
Studies  
Bulletin 1967

Linking theory &  
practice

## Journal of Co-operative Studies

The *Journal of Co-operative Studies* is a peer-reviewed international journal published by the UK Society for Co-operative Studies (Registered Charity No 1175295) and distributed in Canada in co-operation with the Canadian Association of Studies in Co-operation (CASC) and in Ireland in co-operation with the Irish Society for Co-operative Studies.

The *Journal* is published three times a year — Summer, Autumn and Winter and is a green open-access journal. Manuscripts will be published online at [www.ukscs.coop](http://www.ukscs.coop) following a six month embargo period.

### UKSCS Membership and Subscriptions — per annum

Individual Memberships — UK residents:

Standard — UKSCS membership plus PDF of <i>Journal</i>	£25
Standard — UKSCS membership, PDF of <i>Journal</i> and printed copy by post	£40
Student/Unwaged — UKSCS membership plus PDF of <i>Journal</i>	£15
Student/Unwaged — UKSCS membership, PDF of <i>Journal</i> and printed copy by post	£30

Individual Associate Membership (International)

Associate member plus PDF of <i>Journal</i>	£25
Associate member plus PDF of <i>Journal</i> and one print copy by post	£55

Co-operative Organisation Membership — UK:

Standard — UKSCS membership plus PDF of <i>Journal</i>	£30
Standard — UKSCS membership, PDF of <i>Journal</i> and printed copy by post	£50

Co-operative Organisation Associate Membership (International)

Associate member plus PDF of <i>Journal</i>	£30
Associate member plus PDF of <i>Journal</i> and one print copy by post	£65

Institutional Orders (Printed Copy): Single issue £45, Per volume (3 issues) £120

Members of the Canadian Association for the Study of Co-operation and the Irish Society for Co-operative Studies receive PDF copies through those organisations.

**For information on subscriptions and orders, please contact:**

**[info@ukscs.coop](mailto:info@ukscs.coop)**

### General Correspondence Address

Secretary, UK Society for Co-operative Studies, Co-operatives UK, Holyoake House, Hanover Street, Manchester M60 0AS, UK.  
(Email [secretary@ukscs.coop](mailto:secretary@ukscs.coop))

ISSN 0961-5784 Copyright 2021

© UK Society for Co-operative Studies (Registered Charity No 1175295)

# Journal of Co-operative Studies Reprint Series

## Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin 1967

### Contents

Foreword: Reprint Series 1: 2021 3

#### **Bulletin 1 — June 1967**

Message from the Rt. Hon. C. A. R. Crosland 5

The Society for Co-operative Studies 7

Current Co-operative Studies and Research 11

Co-operative Studies in Other Countries  
W. P. Watkins 15

Constitution of the Society for Co-operative Studies 17

#### **Bulletin 2 — December 1967**

Society for Co-operative Studies — Editorial Notes and Reports from the Regions  
R. L. Marshall 19

Current Co-operative Studies and Research 23

Co-operative Studies at Strathclyde  
Thomas F. Carbury 25

The Problem of Sample Selection in Co-operative Membership Studies — A Research Note  
John Whitfield 27

Co-operative Staff Education Training — Guidelines for the Future  
R. L. Marshall 31

## **Editorial addresses for correspondence:**

Editor: Dr Jan Myers, Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University, UK.  
(Email: editor@ukscs.coop)

Deputy Editor: Dr Paul A Jones, Liverpool John Moores University, UK.  
(Email: p.a.jones@ljmu.ac.uk)

Deputy Editor (Canada): Professor Darryl Reed, University of British Columbia,  
Canada/Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation. (Email: darryl.reed@ubc.ca)

Deputy Editor (Ireland): Dr Olive McCarthy, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland.  
(Email: o.mccarthy@ucc.ie)

Deputy Editor (Production): Gillian Lonergan, UK Society for Co-operative Studies, UK.  
(Email: gillian.lonergan@ukscs.coop)

Review Editor: Nick Matthews, Co-operatives UK/Co-operative Group/Heart of England  
Co-operative Society/Coventry University, UK. (Email: nick.matthews@phonecoop.coop)

## **Editorial Advisory Board (Journal of Co-operative Studies)**

Johnston Birchall, Professor Emeritus, Stirling University, UK  
Professor Leslie Brown, Mount St Vincent University, Canada  
Professor Rafael Chaves, University of Valencia, Spain  
Dr Peter Davis, School of Business, Leicester University, UK  
Professor Derek Jones, Hamilton College, USA  
Professor Patrick Laviolette, Tallinn University, Estonia  
Dr Olive McCarthy, Centre for Co-operative Studies, University College Cork, Ireland  
Mary Mellor, Professor Emerita, University of Northumbria, UK  
Jerker Nilsson, Professor Emeritus, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden  
Professor Sonja Novkovic, Saint Mary's University, Canada  
Dr Adam Piechowski, Director, Cooperative Research Institute, Poland  
Alan Robb, Co-operative Consultant, New Zealand  
Professor Molly Scott-Cato, Roehampton University, UK  
Dr Linda Shaw, Co-operative College, UK  
Ian Snaith, Consultant, Anthony Collins Solicitors, UK  
Professor Peter Somerville, University of Lincoln, UK  
Roger Spear, Professor Emeritus, Open University, UK  
Professor Stephen Yeo, Ruskin College, UK

# Foreword

## UKSCS Archives Reprint Series 1: 2021

This series of reprints gives new life to the scanned articles from the *Journal* archives. As well as making each article available on its website, the UKSCS is republishing whole *Journals* from the first issue of the *Bulletin* in 1967 to the final *Bulletin* in 1985, before its renaming to the *Journal of Co-operative Studies*. This is part of the project to make *Journal* issues accessible both in re-issue print versions as well as part of *Journal* archive collection on the UKSCS website: <https://www.ukscs.coop/pages/4-journal-of-co-operative-studies>

The original issues published as part of this '1967 Annual' provide a history of the start-up and development of what was then the Society for Co-operative Studies and then later became UKSCS. Its *Bulletins* are a news account of the activities of the Society and many of the themes — education, democracy, member engagement, international networks, research — are no less relevant today. Indeed, they provide much food for thought as well as giving insight into the experience and commitment of those individuals involved in the Society and in the wider co-operative movement.

Many of these themes were explored at the UKSCS 50th anniversary conference in 2017 — co-operative history, politics, public service, education, new co-operativism, marketplace and sustainability, leading and managing, governance and accountability — and continue to be the focus of contributions to the *Journal* from a range of co-operators and researchers. The *Journal's* editors continue to welcome contributions that bring new arguments and perspectives to the enduring debates such as those featured here.

**UKSCS  
2021**



# Message from The Rt. Hon. C. A. R. Crosland

Those responsible for the direction of Co-operative societies and the Co-operative Movement — whether directors or officials — have of course an immediate task of meeting the conditions and challenges of the moment by the relevant decisions. These decisions, however, require to be guided by long-term objectives based on the analysis and assessment of the needs of the future. This was a general emphasis in the *Co-operative Independent Commission Report*: the last words of the general part of that *Report* were:

Indeed, our final recommendation is that the Movement should formally re-examine not only constitutional issues such as this but also its basic trading policies at least once every decade.

To this process, formal or informal, of continuing re-examination and re-definition of Co-operative policies I believe the Society for Co-operative Studies can be of great help. It can bring together representatives from all areas of Co-operative interest and many individuals, particularly from universities and colleges, interested in Co-operative institutions and policies. The Movement can gain greatly from exposing itself to this kind of sympathetic and salutary study: and universities and colleges too can gain from this engagement with an organisation of considerable economic and social significance in our times.

I wish the Society well in its intentions and efforts.

**ANTHONY CROSLAND**

**June 1967**

## Notes

Anthony Crosland served as Secretary to the first independent Commission of Inquiry into the Co-operative Movement, also known as the Gaitskell Commission (1956-58). The report produced in 1958 and published by the Co-operative Union was largely written by Crosland. An archive copy of the report can be found at Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/CooperativeIndependentCommissionReport1958/mode/2up>

This message was first published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin*, 1, June 1967, p. 3





# The Society for Co-operative Studies

The Society for Co-operative Studies has been formed. It will be a systematic link between the Co-operative Movement and the universities and colleges for the exchange of information and experience on co-operative studies and research. This link will help in identifying and providing for further needs in study and research. Individuals and organisations interested in these developments may become members of this new Society, which is established in response to two developments: the quickening interest of universities and colleges in co-operative studies and research and equally, the desire of the Co-operative Movement to draw to itself still more the interest and help of such agencies.

## Its Formation

An inaugural meeting held on 3rd and 4th April 1967 at the Co-operative College, Stanford Hall, was attended by over 60 participants from universities and colleges, the trades union movement and co-operative organisations, local, sectional and national. Officers were elected and the scope of the Society was discussed. Then the participants divided into regional groups to clarify the existing extent of co-operative studies and research within their areas and to suggest immediate plans for local organisation and meetings, as well as recommendations for future development. The Society, which will work in close association with the educational agencies of the Co-operative Movement, will rely very strongly on activities in the regions.

## The *Bulletin*

During the general discussion it was pointed out that there was a need for a bulletin giving information on the research and studies being undertaken. The *Bulletin* seeks to meet this need and will provide future opportunities for such exchanges. Meanwhile this present issue presents the history of the Society for the benefit of intending members or as a reminder for those who shared in its formation.

## The Beginning

The initial general interest was in the establishment of a Society for Co-operative Studies which would concern itself, initially at least, exclusively with the immediate and long-term problems confronting the Co-operative Movement in Britain, and with the promotion of studies which might help co-operative bodies to achieve satisfactory solutions to these problems.

The idea was discussed at a short conference of university and college representatives and some leading co-operators at Stanford Hall in May. It was decided to look more deeply into the proposal at a more representative meeting and this was held in September, when Dr. Wilson and Mr. R. L. Marshall, the Co-operative Union's Chief Education Officer, were instructed to draft a constitution with the aid of a panel. This was done and the draft was presented at the inaugural meeting on the 3rd and 4th April 1967. After discussion and amendment, the constitution was accepted in the form in which it now appears at the end of this *Bulletin*.

## The Inaugural Meeting

The plenary discussion during the April meeting emphasised the valuable contribution that the Society could make in forming a bridge between co-operative business organisation and the university, in developing the provision by universities for professional and lay management, and in encouraging greater attention to Co-operation within university syllabuses and research.

Specific areas for attention were suggested:

- a general survey and definition of the Movement's role in present conditions
- housing
- the co-operative press
- the application of co-operative methods to state industries
- attention to co-operative techniques and principles in the studies in community development undertaken by overseas students in Britain, for example, at the Universities of London and Manchester.

There were several references to the fact that research could only be coordinated or directed by those who paid; this was accepted, and a suggestion was made that societies might be willing to contribute money to sustain a specialist project each year. A survey of British co-operative education was being undertaken by the International Forum on Co-operative Research and information from this survey might be of service.

The session concluded with Dr. Wilson identifying four primary needs for research:

- (i) Recruitment, selection, and training of managers which would be a follow-up to the Wells Report and would incorporate attention to the Co-operative Union Working Party Report on Staff Education.
- (ii) Attention to the structural and financial reorganisation of the Movement.
- (iii) Attention to power in Co-operative Societies.
- (iv) Research on the use of international comparisons of Co-operative performance and of inter-firm comparisons within the United Kingdom.

## **Meetings of Regional Groups**

The participants met in six groups: The Metropolitan area, the South, South-West and West; Scotland; the North; the North-East; the North-West; and the Midlands. Their tasks were:

- (a) To make suggestions for joint conveners for each region whose task, in association with their Secretary, the Sectional Education Officer, would be to launch the Society regionally.
- (b) To suggest a suitable meeting place for inaugural and other meetings and those organisations and persons with whom contact should be established in advance of the inaugural meeting.
- (c) To review existing plans for college/university courses and to what extent they could be supplemented, and to review existing and desirable research projects.
- (d) To say whether the region would like to organise the annual general meeting in 1968 or 1969.

## **Into Action**

Following their discussions, the groups reported back. As a result, first, an approach has been made to two acting joint conveners, one from the "academic" side and one from the "co-operative" side, to be responsible for each of the inaugural meetings to be held at regional level. Over three hundred invitations have been sent covering all university and extra-mural

departments, all technical colleges with Co-operative Union studies and other individuals and organisations. This effort is being supplemented by sectional approaches; in addition, a general invitation has been extended to all co-operative societies and in particular their education departments. Second, the details of existing research and plans for 1967/68 college/university courses given in the groups' reports form the basis of the summary on pages 11 to 12.

## **An End and a Beginning**

The inaugural meeting at Stanford Hall was concluded with Professor S. Pollard, one of the three newly elected Presidents, in the chair. In thanking everyone for their attendance and contribution, he expressed the hope that we could look forward to something positive and tangible at future meetings.

## **Note**

This article was first published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin*, 1, pp. 5-7



# Current Co-operative Studies and Research

The Education Department of the Co-operative Union and the Co-operative College have, of course, a long-established and varied service in staff education and training, and in member education and youth work. On the more advanced levels of the first, perhaps the three main reference points are:

1. The Education Department provides curricula, syllabuses, examinations and awards in both management, and secretaryship and accounting, leading in the first instance to the Diploma in Co-operative Management and, in the second, to the Diploma in Co-operative Secretaryship. Students prepare for these in local classes, by correspondence courses made available by the Department, and at the Co-operative College.
2. The College has 120 places, most of them taken up by sessional courses in social and co-operative studies (for a diploma awarded by the University of Nottingham), in co-operation overseas, mainly for the officers of government departments in the developing countries, and in management and secretaryship and accountancy, both for employees of co-operative societies and for direct entrants from universities and full-time courses in business studies. There is also a sequence throughout the year of medium-length courses of about six weeks for employees of some experience and probably some professional qualification, who have been earmarked for advancement in management responsibility. The remaining places at the College are taken up by a sequence of short intensive courses of one or two weeks, dealing with specialist subjects of co-operative management.
3. The Department and College also promote research in various ways: by the staff and students of the College; by sponsoring group projects — for example, the current preparation of a manual for co-operative management; and by association in particular projects with other agencies for example, in recent years with the Universities of Nottingham, Leeds and Keele.

There has been a developing contribution by universities and technical colleges over recent years. The universities and similar institutions, in particular the extra-mural departments of universities in the Northern, North-Western, and North-Eastern sections, have arranged courses for co-operative managers and directors dealing with co-operative organisation and development. In the North-East, research has been undertaken by a group of co-operative officials under the direction of Mr. T. E. Stephenson and published in a Co-operative College paper, *Aspects of Dividend*.

## Courses in Prospect for Session 1967/68

Some definitely arranged and some still under discussion.

### North

Leeds University in association with Middlesbrough Society: a course on business efficiency with the accent on retail distribution for departmental managers and above.

Durham University Business School in association with Stockton Society: a course based on Harvard Business School Case Study method for departmental managers and above.

Durham University Business School in association with Co-operative Union Section, under discussion: a course on retail/wholesale relationships for departmental managers and above.

Municipal College of Commerce, Newcastle, in association with Co-operative Union Section, under discussion: a course based on Co-operative Union syllabus "Facing the Future", for society directors. Also, possibly at Stockton.

## **Yorkshire and Humberside**

Leeds University in association with Co-operative Union Section: a study group on long range planning and corporate strategy for senior managers; a management development group on the broad principles, objectives, and methods of co-operative management for managers.

Leeds College of Commerce in association with Co-operative Union Section: a third-year course leading to the Diploma in Management Studies for managers.

Bradford University Business School in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course on distribution management (part of the MSc. Programme in Management Studies) for graduates intending to enter the distributive trades; a retail seminar in marketing for chief executive officers.

Hull and Sheffield Universities in association with Co-operative Union Section: a management development group is under discussion.

## **North-West**

Lancaster University Department of Marketing in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course on marketing for chief officials and departmental managers.

Manchester University in association with Co-operative Union Section: two courses and a workshop for senior officials.

## **Scotland**

Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow universities in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course on Co-operative Studies for Society directors.

## **South**

Oxford University in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course on Co-operative management for chief officials and departmental managers.

## **Research in Progress**

### **Yorkshire and Humberside**

Leeds University: Level of decision-making in the board room. Mr T. E. Stephenson.

Bradford University: Labour relations in the consumer co-operative movement. Mrs. J. Paterson.

### **North-west**

Manchester University: Business ratios in co-operative societies. Mr. J. Roper.

The co-operative movement in Sweden. Dr. D. A. Wilson.

Keele University: Democratic participation in a co-operative society. Mr. J. Whitfield.

## **Notes**

An extended and developed version of T. E. Stephenson's 1966 report, *Aspects of Dividend*, was published in April 1966:

Stephenson, T. E. (1966). Attitudes to dividend in Co-operative Retail Societies. *Annals of Public and Co-operative Economics*, 37(2), 121-131. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8292.1966.tb01686.x>

Other publications by T. E. Stephenson include:

- The leader-follower relationship. *The Sociological Review*, 7(2), 179-195 — published 1959. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1959.tb01027.x>
- *Management in Co-operative Societies* (1963, Heinemann)
- The role of principles in a democratic organization. *Political Studies*, XII(3) (1964, pp. 327-340). <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fj.1467-9248.1964.tb00731.x>
- The relationship between the chief executive officer and the board of directors in the Co-operative environment. *Annals of Public and Co-operative Economics*, 40(4), 455-468 — published 1969. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8292.1969.tb00284.x>
- Conflict in the Co-operative Retail Society. *Annals of Public and Co-operative Economics*, 42(3), 205-216 — published 1971. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8292.1971.tb00356.x>

Robert Leckie Marshall was the Co-operative Union's chief education officer and became principal and chief executive officer of the Co-operative College until his retirement in 1977. He served as editor of the *Society of Co-operative Studies Bulletin* and the *Journal of Co-operative Studies* from 1967–1995.

Sidney Pollard was Professor of Economic History at the University of Sheffield. His book, *Labour history and the Labour Movement in Britain* (1999, Routledge) gave special attention to Robert Owen and co-operation, as well as William King, and the formation of the Co-operative Party. In 2000, Emeritus Professor Colin Holmes who worked closely with Sidney Pollard wrote about his life and work, published by the British Academy (*Sidney Pollard, 1925-1998* — <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/1434/105p513.pdf>).

Dr. Alex Wilson was Chair of the Society for Co-operative Studies.

The Wells Report, published in 1963 (Co-operative College Paper No. 10), drew attention to the need to employ HR specialists with regard to the recruitment, selection, and training of managers in retail consumer societies.

This article was first published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin*, 1, June 1967, pp.8-10





# Co-operative Studies in Other Countries

W. P. Watkins, JP., BA.

The establishment of the Society for Co-operative Studies is cordially welcomed by a number of older organisations with similar aims which are already linked together in the International Co-operative Scientific Forum. Yet because of the endless differences in national circumstances and conditions, there are many differences in constitution between them, even though their objects are approximately the same.

## In Western Germany

In Western Germany, for example, there is no national association for promoting co-operative studies, but there exists a number of Co-operative Research Institutes created by universities in various parts of the country. These Institutes work more or less closely with the apex unions of the four main branches of the Co-operative Movement — agricultural, artisanal, consumers and housing — on study, research and teaching projects. They also publish jointly a quarterly review, *The Review of the Whole Co-operative Movement* (to translate its German title) which, as its title implies, takes the whole Co-operative field as its province. It was they who took the initiative of convening the triennial International Co-operative Scientific Congresses which bring co-operative educationists together from every continent.

## In France

The organisation most nearly resembling what our young Society for Co-operative Studies might eventually become is probably the French Institute of Co-operative Studies which is a national body with headquarters in Paris. It shares its home in the Champ de Mars district with the College Coopératif, which itself forms part of the School of Advanced Technical Studies of the Sorbonne. The chairman of the Board of the Institute is Professor Georges Lasserre, professor of economics at the Faculty of Laws and Economic Science.

The Institute is the joint creation in 1959 of the central organisations of the Agricultural, Consumers' and Workers' Productive Co-operative movements. Its management board consists of their representatives together with two members of the university. One of these is Professor Bernard Lavergne, a former colleague of the great apostle of co-operation in France, Professor Charles Gide, with whom he collaborated to establish the *Review of Cooperative Studies* in 1921. This Review still continues to appear under the auspices of the Institute.

The main object of the Institute is to promote and encourage research, study, information, and documentation about all branches of the Co-operative Movement. In addition, it takes part in the study of all important questions relating to co-operative theory and practice and does much to introduce and develop the teaching of co-operation in the public educational system at all levels, in youth movements and in all institutions where knowledge of co-operation can be usefully spread.

## Local activity

One of the most notable features of the Institute is the rapid growth of its network of local and regional groups and study circles. Through this type of action, it pursues a twofold aim: to bring together the various types of co-operative enterprise in a given region or district, and to forge close links between those who practise co-operation and those who have to teach the subject. More often than not, the action is based on the local government division, known as a

département, and it comprises seminars, discussions, study visits, etc., considerable freedom being allowed to the groups in regard to method.

## In America

There is just space to mention the American Institute of Co-operation. This grew out of the agricultural Co-operative Movement and its primary object was to encourage the teaching of agricultural co-operation in schools, colleges, and universities. In recent years, however, it has extended its interest to other forms of co-operation and has become one of the most important agencies working for closer working relations and mutually defensive action, in both the economic and political spheres, between all branches of the Movement. The headquarters of the Institute are in Washington, D.C. and in addition to carrying on research, it organises an annual study session which attracts leading co-operators from all parts of the country.

## The Author

William Pascoe Watkins was at the time of publication a President of the Society for Co-operative Studies. In 1929, he joined the staff of the International Co-operative Alliance and was appointed Director of the ICA in 1951. In addition, Will Watkins joined the Co-operative Sunday newspaper, *Reynolds News*, in 1936. In 1946, he was appointed Adviser of Co-operation to the Military Government to assist in the rehabilitation of the consumers' Co-operative Movement in Germany. Although he retired in 1963, he continued his work as a writer, teacher, and consultant on Co-operation. Amongst other things he acted as rapporteur for the ICA Commission on Co-operative Principles (1965-66). His books include:

- *Co-operation: A survey of the history, principles, and organisation of the co-operative movement in Great Britain and Ireland*, with Fred Hall (1934, Co-operative Union Ltd).
- *The International Co-operative Alliance 1895-1970* (1970, ICA)
- *Robert Owen: Industrialist, reformer, visionary, 1771-1858*, with Margaret Cole, John, Butt & John Harrison (1971, Robert Owen Bicentenary Association)
- *Co-operative Principles: Today & tomorrow* (1986, Holyoake Books)

## Further Information

*The Review of the Whole Co-operative Movement — Zeitschrift für das gesamte Genossenschaftswesen* was first published in 1950.

For more information, visit: <https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/ZFGG/html>

<https://www.agi-genoforschung.de/language/en/welcome/>

This article first appeared in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin* 1, June 1967, pp. 11-12

# The Society for Co-operative Studies

## Constitution

### 1. TITLE

The title shall be the Society for Co-operative Studies.

### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose will be to promote the exchange of information and experience on Co-operative studies and research and to help in identifying and developing the studies and research still needed.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership will be open to all individuals and organisations interested in the development of Co-operative studies and research, each organisation nominating one person as a participant.

### 4. ORGANISATION

(a) The Society will be an independent voluntary organisation working in close association with the educational organisations of the Co-operative Movement and not intended to overlap the executive functions of these organisations.

(b) There will be an annual general meeting of individuals and organisations in membership of the Society. Organisations will have one vote each. Decisions will be taken by a majority of the votes of those present.

(c) The annual general meeting will appoint the following national officers:

i. *Presidents*

The number will be decided by the annual general meeting and will represent professional service both inside and outside the Co-operative Movement. Presidents will be eligible for re-election.

ii. *Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen*

The chairman will hold office for one year, and shall not be eligible for re-election in the following year.

iii. *Secretary and Treasurer*

This appointment will be made annually.

These officers will be responsible for the affairs of the Society between annual general meetings and in accordance with any decisions of policy made by the meeting.

(d) Members of the Society within a Section, or group of Sections, of the Co-operative Union will be invited to appoint two joint conveners one primarily associated with the Co-operative interest and one primarily associated with the academic interest, to take a lead in organising regional activities.

The officer of the Education Department of the Co-operative Union in the Section or region will act as Secretary for each set of joint conveners.

### 5. ACTIVITIES

Without setting a limit to the activities that may carry out the purpose of the Society, the following framework will give some guidance:

(a) Fields of Study

Appropriate fields of study for the Society to keep under review will be:

- i. Structure of the Movement
- ii. Business efficiency
- iii. Member participation
- iv. Service to the consumer
- v. Political action and organisation
- vi. Role of the British Movement in international Co-operation
- vii. History of the Movement
- viii. Development of Co-operative principles in other fields of economic and social activity.

(b) Lines of Development

These will include:

- i. Encouragement of courses and research projects at universities and colleges and at the Co-operative College.
- ii. Meetings and seminars regionally.
- iii. Meetings and seminars nationally.
- iv. Relations with international organisations for Co-operative studies and research.

(c) Publication

Policy on publications, whether through the Society's own or other media such as Co-operative College Papers, will be determined by members at the annual general meetings.

## 6. FINANCE

The annual subscription will be set at a rate appropriate to cover the running expenses of the Society and will initially be £2 for an individual member, and £10 for an organisation.

## 7. AMENDMENTS

The constitution can be amended by a majority vote at an annual general meeting. Notice of the proposal of any amendment must be made to the Secretary.

## Notes

This is the original constitution of the Society, published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies, Bulletin* 1, June 1967, pp. 13-14. It was revised in 1985 when the Society became a registered charity; 'UK' was later added to the name. In 2017, the UK Society for Co-operative Studies became a charitable incorporated organisation.

# Society for Co-operative Studies — Editorial Notes and Reports from the Regions

R. L. Marshall

The Society for Co-operative Studies is a systematic link between the Co-operative Movement and universities and colleges for the exchange of information, experience, and views on the development of co-operative studies and research.

## The *Bulletin*

The *Bulletin* provides opportunity for reporting the progress of this exchange, *Bulletin* No. 1 dealt with the formation of the Society; *Bulletin* No. 2 continues largely with information on the regional organisations which have been or are being formed; and *Bulletin* No. 3, to be issued in the spring [1968], will be a prelude to the Annual General Meeting.

## Annual General Meeting and Conference: 18th and 19th April 1968

The Annual General Meeting and Conference will be held at the Stephenson Hall, University of Sheffield on Thursday and Friday 18th and 19th April, when, in addition to the presentation of the Annual Report, it is hoped to have two speakers to introduce discussions of the future development of the Society.

More details will be announced later, but in the meantime a booking form is enclosed with every copy of this *Bulletin* and members of the Society are asked to complete and send to the Secretary and Treasurer by 22nd September.

## Reports from the Regions

The Society is now embarked on its second stage — the development of regional activity. Our first *Bulletin* issued in June this year, described the formation of the Society at an inaugural meeting held at Stanford Hall in April, when there was discussion on local organisation and future developments.

Following these discussions, approaches were made to find two acting joint conveners, one from the “academic” side and one from the “co-operative” side, to be responsible for each of the inaugural meetings to be held at regional level. Acting joint conveners have been appointed in all but one of the regions; three inaugural meetings have taken place and plans for others are proceeding or imminent.

The Sectional Education Officer of the Co-operative Union is to serve as the secretary in the appropriate region. The reports from the regions are given below.

### Midland

*Acting Joint Conveners:*

Dr. G. N. Ostergaard, Faculty of Commerce and Social Science, University of Birmingham.  
Mr. Lloyd A. Harrison, CSD., Managing Secretary, Nottingham Co-operative Society.

It is anticipated that the inaugural meeting will be held during November [1967].

## **North**

### *Acting Joint Conveners:*

Mr. L. S. Wilson, MA., Durham University Business School.

Mr. W. Martin Reed, CSD., Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Newcastle Co-operative Society.

Discussions are taking place about an inaugural meeting. It is hoped that this will be in late October or early November [1967] when members of the Society will be invited to a buffet tea in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, followed by the inaugural meeting and election of officers, and thereafter an open conference will take place.

## **Yorkshire and Humberside**

### *Acting Joint Conveners:*

Mr. T. E. Stephenson, BA., (Dunelm), Department of Adult Education and Extramural Studies, University of Leeds.

Mr. S. P. Clarke, CSD., Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Bradford Co-operative Society.

The inaugural meeting, attended by 44 delegates, was held on 29th June [1967] in Leeds. Mr. S. G. Clarke took the chair and outlined the origin of the proposed society, stemming back to the first Co-operative Management Studies groups started in universities in the North-East twelve years ago. Mr. T. E. Stephenson, University of Leeds, then addressed the meeting on the aims of the Society which he said were fourfold:

1. An organisation wherein the academics and the practical co-operators could meet together in forums and study groups etc., to examine problems of the present and aims and objectives for the Movement in the future.
2. Research — the need to examine problems of the region such as Regional Societies, their corporate policies, also long-range planning etc.
3. To develop courses in Management and Director training for existing directors and managers, also for the younger people coming up who showed promise.
4. The need to stimulate and develop an interest amongst staff of universities and technical colleges so that eventually there would be a body of academics throughout the country interested in co-operative affairs. This could lead, eventually, to departments or Institutes of co-operative studies in universities as part of their normal programme of study.

The questions and discussion which followed included research and the participation of the lay members in the Society.

Mr. J. H. Harrison, the Co-operative Union Sectional Education Officer, outlined the proposed programme of courses in association with the four universities in the North-East — Leeds, Bradford, Hull, and Sheffield — and pointed out that over 600 places had been filled in the North-East in the past twelve years.

It was agreed that a small executive committee be formed of the conveners and their deputies for a period of one year.

A weekend conference held jointly with the National Co-operative Education Association was arranged for November, when Mr. Lloyd Harrison and Mr. J. Roper, the co-authors of the recent Fabian pamphlet, will have for their subject "Towards Regional Societies".



## **North-West.**

### *Acting Joint Conveners:*

Mr. J. F. H. Roper, MA., Faculty of Economic and Social Studies, University of Manchester.  
Mr. F. Bruckshaw, Editor, *Co-operative News*.

Possibly because of a rather lengthy interval between the issue of advance notices and the actual date of the meeting, plus the incidence of an important CWS meeting earlier in the day, there was a rather disappointing attendance at the inaugural meeting of the North-Western branch of the society held in Manchester University on 26th October. Twenty-one were present including individual members and representatives of societies and other organisations.

Mr. F. Bruckshaw, one of the two conveners, presided and the discussion was opened by Dr. Alex Wilson, national chairman, who outlined the aims of the Society, and its development so far. He pointed out that the North-West was at the top of the league table in terms of membership, having 26 out of a national total of 115. Mr. John Roper, joint convener, suggested a number of lines of activity for the society, with meetings not only in Manchester but in other parts of the section.

In general discussion the view was expressed that Friday was the best meeting night; that meetings should be more in the nature of seminars than conferences; and that early topics for study and discussion might be regional society organisation and problems of capital. Short papers on these topics might be distributed in advance of the meetings so that the whole time could be taken up by study and discussion. It was agreed that the two conveners should be asked to continue in office.

## **Scotland**

### *Acting Joint Conveners:*

Dr. T. F. Carbery, MSc.(Econ.), DPA., Senior Lecturer, Department of Commerce, University of Strathclyde.  
Mr. G. R. Gay, JP., President, St. Cuthbert's Co-operative Association.

The first meeting of the conveners, Dr. T. F. Carbery and Mr. G. R. Gay, was held on 29th August in the University of Strathclyde with Mr. H. A. Macfadyen (secretary) in attendance. The membership was reviewed and agreement was reached upon a limited field of activity, discussions to be continued at the next meeting in November.

## **South**

### *Acting Joint Conveners:*

Mr. Peter Shea, BSc., Senior Lecturer in Educational Psychology, Hockerill College of Education.  
Mr. D. McNab, JP., AACCA., General Manager, London Co-operative Society.

A fairly early meeting is proposed.

## **South-West**

Explorations are proceeding regarding the appointment of the acting joint conveners.

## **West**

### *Acting Joint Conveners:*

Mr. W. E. Jenkins, Extra-Mural Department, University of Swansea.  
Mr. M. E. Morgan, Group General Manager, Swansea CRS.

The inaugural meeting was held in Cardiff on Monday, 11th September, attended by nine delegates. It was addressed by Dr. Alex Wilson, chairman of the Society for Co-operative

Studies, who spoke of the hopes and aspirations of the Society, stressing the important part that could be played at regional level. Discussion followed on the lines of developments that were possible in the Western section and among the subjects raised were the retail/wholesale relationship, industrial training, stability of capital, social and economic structure of the Movement and the optimum size of store units.

It was agreed that a report of the inaugural meeting be circulated, a further appeal made towards increasing the membership and that a working body should be formed by invitation before the next meeting was held. Mr. Morgan will continue as a convener, and the other appointed was Mr. C. P. Jones, Managing Secretary, Tredegar Co-operative Society.

## Notes

The Fabian pamphlet referred to in this article was published in 1967 (Fabian Research Pamphlet No. 260) – *Towards regional co-operatives*.

This editorial was published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin*, 2, December 1967, pp. 3-8



# Current Co-operative Studies and Research

Information on the current contribution by universities and colleges to co-operative studies and research was given in *Bulletin* No. 1 and the following notes now give a comprehensive list. Three universities are promoting courses for the first time: Oxford, Leicester, and Birmingham.

## Courses in Prospect for Session 1967/68

Some definitely arranged and some still under discussion.

### Midland

Birmingham University in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course designed to show how economic and political analysis makes its contribution to management organisation and administration in retail trades for senior management.

Leicester University in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course on markets and marketing for senior management, including a group analysis of a society departmental store.

Nottingham University in association with Co-operative Union Section: under discussion, a course for senior management, commencing January 1968.

### North

Leeds University in association with Middlesbrough Society: a three-year course on business efficiency with the accent on retail distribution for departmental managers and above.

Durham University Business School in association with Stockton Society: an 8-meeting course based on Harvard Business School Case Study method for departmental managers and above.

Durham University Business School in association with Hartlepool Society: a course is under discussion.

Municipal College of Commerce, Newcastle, in association with Co-operative Union Section: a 12-meeting course dealing with the problems of staff recruitment, selection and training; a course dealing with management accounting and budgetary control.

Stockton/Billingham Technical College, Billingham, in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course based on Co-operative Union Syllabus "Facing the Future", for society directors.

Municipal College of Commerce, Newcastle, in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course based on Co-operative Union syllabus "Facing the Future" for society directors.

### Yorkshire and Humberside

Leeds University in association with Co-operative Union Section: a study group (2nd year) analysing the problems in the development of a regional society for senior managers.

Leeds College of Commerce in association with Co-operative Union Section: a third-year course (final year) leading to the Diploma in Management Studies for managers.

Bradford University Business School in association with Co-operative Union Section: a retail management forum for directors and senior managers.

Hull and Sheffield Universities in association with Co-operative Union Section: discussions proceeding.

Durham University Business School in association with Co-operative Union Section: under discussion, a seminar in Scarborough.

### **North-West**

Manchester University in association with Co-operative Union Section: two courses and a workshop for senior officials.

### **Scotland**

Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow universities in association with Co-operative Union Section: courses on co-operative studies for society directors.

### **South**

Oxford University in association with Co-operative Union Section: a course on Co-operative management for chief officials and departmental managers.

### **South-West**

Plymouth College of Technology in association with Plymouth Society: four seminars on marketing management for departmental managers.

## **Research in Progress**

### **Yorkshire and Humberside**

Leeds University: Level of decision-making in the board room. Mr. T. E. Stephenson.

### **North-West**

Manchester University: Business Ratios in Co-operative Societies. Mr. J. Roper.

The Co-operative Movement in Sweden. Dr. A. Wilson.

Keele University: Democratic Participation in a Co-operative Society. Mr. J. Whitfield.

### **Scotland**

Heriot-Watt University: Labour Relations in the Consumer Co-operative Movement. Mrs. J. Paterson.

## **Note**

This article was first published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin* 2, December 1967, pp. 9-10.

# Co-operative Studies at Strathclyde

**Thomas F. Carbury**

A private report recently submitted to Holyoake House by an academic in the sunny south observed that by and large the universities of the United Kingdom ignored the Co-operative Movement so far as teaching was concerned and that in only two of the universities could the teaching situation be regarded, by those interested in co-operation, as being “satisfactory”. Strathclyde was one of those two.

## Co-operative Content in Commerce

On learning this I was not surprised for although I cannot speak of the school of Arts and Social Studies, I am aware of the content of classes in the other non-technological, non-scientific, school — that of Business and Administration. This is not to say that the co-operative content of certain classes could not be increased: it could. Moreover, the current situation, however “satisfactory”, is still very far from that which a co-operative zealot would desire. Furthermore, what is taught is put over with more objectivity and less partisanship than the most dedicated co-operators would like. Thus, in the Second Year Commerce class, a class taken by some 70-90 students in the School, there are four lectures and two seminars on the Co-operative Movement. In the first two lectures and seminar, the class determines and examines that which is distinctive about the Co-operatives and in the concluding lectures and seminar goes on to examine the current trading position of the Movement, particularly that of the retail societies. The vices and virtues of the Movement’s shops are examined with candour.

In the third year of the BA curriculum, the Commerce class has recently taken as its theme the responsibility of the business concern vis-a-vis those around it and in it — its employees, its management, its shareholders, its suppliers, its consumers, society in general. In the second term when this class deals with the business’s relationship to its consumers, there are two lectures and one seminar on the Co-operatives as ‘Defenders of the Consumers’ Faith’. Another third-year class which has been running in its existing format for a few years now is primarily concerned with the public sector and it in turn has four lectures on the Co-operatives as a form of social ownership. A new fourth year Honours class in Government-Business Relations examines the ways in which governments and business enterprises endeavour to influence, pressurise, and finally control, one another. Here again the Co-operative Movement is discussed — for example on the merits and demerits of direct political action.

## Co-operative Content in Marketing

All the classes discussed so far, are offered by the Department of Commerce and that, foreby, by the main Commerce stream of that department. But the department has sub-sections dealing with Marketing and Business Economics.

The Marketing section is, in fact, the biggest “department” of Marketing in the country and it, naturally, devotes a fair amount of time to the trading questions of the Co-operatives in such classes as Marketing I and Distribution. Moreover, the sub-department offers a Post-graduate Diploma in Marketing in which the students undertake a piece of market research and submit a report thereon. Last year, the three female students in this class conducted a 100-interview survey of housewives in a Glasgow suburb on their concept of a Co-operative shopper and on whether they themselves went into such shops.

In view of the considerable Co-operative content of the Commerce and Marketing classes, there is little or no need for the Business Economists on the staff to deal with the Movement in

teaching, though some of these economists joined teachers of Commerce and Marketing in a recent open seminar arranged by the Department and addressed by Mr. Tom Taylor, President of the SCWS [Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society].

## Student Reaction

One of the interesting questions which arises from all this is how the students react to it. Initially their reaction is one of surprise, if not disbelief. Almost to a man (and woman) they regard the Movement as dreadfully anachronistic. That any Society is as successful and as efficient as, say, St. Cuthberts of Edinburgh, they find hard to accept. Unfortunately, if their written work is anything to go by, the deficiencies and problems of the Movement stay in their minds much more clearly than do the successes and virtues. Nevertheless, it seems to me to be fair to say that those who attend such classes leave, at the end of their courses, at least with the realisation that it would be foolish to ignore the Co-operatives. Indeed, last year two of our Honours students took this a stage further and concluded the Movement was worth an investment — their careers. Accordingly, they applied to, and were accepted by, the Graduate Management Scheme and are now at the Co-operative College.

Academics for all their supposed cosy living, can on occasion lead perilous lives. It is difficult to deal with matters of political and social consciousness and controversy with complete objectivity. In our naivety we expect our judges to be unbiased, yet this they cannot be. The best we can really expect of them is that they examine their consciences for bias and endeavour to affect what they find. So too then, for teaching in such subjects as Politics, Government, Public Administration, Economics, and some sectors of Commerce. The academics cannot assure society of objectivity — they can but set out to achieve it. It says much for the latent strength of the Co-operatives in Britain that when we try to attain the heights of academic objectivity the results are not unfavourable to the spirit of co-operation.

## The Author

Tom Carbury, MSc. (Econ.), PhD., SPA. was a senior lecturer in the Department of Commerce at the University of Strathclyde, becoming professor of marketing in 1988 and emeritus in 1990 on his retirement. His PhD. focused on the British Co-operative Movement, having been involved in the Co-operative Movement since the age of 14 (*The Herald*, March 20, 2015 — <https://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/13206568.tom-carbery/>).

## Note

This article was originally published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin*, 2, December 1967, pp. 11-12.

# The Problem of Sample Selection in Co-operative Membership Studies — A Research Note

**John Whitfield**

Democratic participation in the government of retail co-operative societies is a question which should be of some concern to all co-operators. The current debate in the Movement about the desirability of regional retail societies brings into consideration the nature and causes of active participation in co-operative democracy. The Co-operative Independent Commission Report [CICR, 1958] argued that the then low level of such participation was “an inevitable consequence of the Movement’s growth from a small minority organisation to its present national size” (p. 17). The concern of the Commission was that those members who did seek to play an active part in the government of their societies should be representative of the whole membership. If this is the case, then democratic government is preserved. Inactive members retain their rights and can exercise them when they choose to do so.

A survey of TASCOS [Ten Acres and Stirchley Co-operative Society, Birmingham, UK] members carried out by G. M. Ostergaard and M. Currell of Birmingham University (reported in *Agenda*, June 1960), has shown that unrepresentativeness in terms of demographic characteristics was then the case in that society. This is to be expected, as “this difference is in line with the widely supported generalisation that leadership in voluntary associations is recruited disproportionately from those with high occupational status” [Ostergaard & Currell 1960, p. 40]. This study also investigated the reasons for which the members joined their society, and perhaps became activists in the government of their society. If participation is to survive meaningfully into what may be an era of mammoth regional retail societies, then continued efforts to examine and understand it are necessary.

At the University of Keele, a small study of democratic participation in a Midlands society has been carried out. This has had two objects: an analysis of the structure of the society, in order to determine the social forces inducing continued participation in such a voluntary organisation; and a comparison of the activist member with the ordinary member who only shops or saves with the society concerned.

The comparison itself sought two principal types of information. Firstly, it was to be a check on the representativeness of the active membership in terms of demographic factors, political and social preferences, and degree of commitment to the society. Secondly, it was to examine the relationship of the ordinary member with the society, and thus seek an indication of the causes of active membership, or an explanation of the low level of participation. Although it was hoped that the survey might enlighten and inform discussion about democracy in large retail societies, this was not an aim of the study. Research specifically directed to such a question would need to be designed differently and might have to await the possible establishment of regional societies. Hypothetical situations such as this kind of study would have to envisage, are notoriously difficult for the sociologist.

This article will give a brief account of the approach taken to the research and also outline some of the problems encountered from a methodological point of view. It is hoped that the latter will be of use to others undertaking research in this field, especially in what has proved to be the vexed question of representative sample selection.

## The Schedule

The schedule, or administered questionnaire, used in the study sought to elicit information of the sort described above. It was pretested with regard to each of the groups on which it was to be used: the activists and the ordinary shopping member. The latter were chosen just at the doors of a variety of the society's premises and, if they proved to be a member, asked part, or all, of the schedule. This process, while not altogether satisfactory, provided a few minor amendments to the projected schedule. With the activists a more serious problem occurred.

The expected small percentage of those who could plausibly be identified as activist members of the society was in fact a good deal smaller than had been foreseen. There was concern that the small numbers involved would not permit the use of precise statistical tests. The number of activists was reduced by the need to pretest the schedule. Those used for the pretest could not be included in the activist sample because of possible bias. The pretesting was likely to have caused consideration of the issues and questions involved. There could be no guarantee that answers to the final schedule would have been uninfluenced by such consideration.

A further reduction of the activist population also occurred. Most of those who had been interviewed as part of the research preliminary to the first draft schedule were activists. It was similarly undesirable to use this group either for pretesting or as respondents.

## The Samples

The direct lessons of studies such as the Keele one for geographically large societies must be recognised as limited. This follows from the problem of identifying activists. If there is, as the CICR appeared to hope, a potential reserve of co-operative activists, who might appear on a major issue such as regionalisation, their very non-participation in the ordinary democratic processes of their societies makes them unavailable to the researcher. Little can be assumed about them: even their existence is hypothetical.

Activists in the society studied were identified by collecting, over a period of time, lists of those who attended members' meetings and auxiliary meetings. A comparison with the TASCOS study already cited indicates that the above suspicions are not implausible. Activists in that study were identified by the Education Department of the society "on the basis of their knowledge of members who attended business meetings or were members of an auxiliary organisation" [Ostergaard & Halsey, 1965, p. 243]. Yet "... 29 per cent of the active sample had not attended any of the last eight quarterly meetings ..." [Ostergaard & Currell, 1960, p. 43].

There are clearly serious problems associated with the identification of "activists". If research is to be conducted rigorously, then the limitations in this aspect must be recognised. There would appear to be grounds to argue that the two studies under discussion depend on different samples and populations of active members.

The sample of ordinary members selected for interview was chosen at random from the society's membership list. Its size was dictated by the small number of interviewers available and was set at 0.01 per cent of the total estimated membership. When it became clear that an extremely low rate of response was occurring, an additional random list of share numbers was chosen. As before, the name and address of the individual to whom each share number had been assigned were ascertained. In addition, certain information about the spending and capital holding of each member was provided. This enabled a check to be made on the accuracy of answers to questions in the schedule.

Other methods of sample selection of ordinary members of the society were considered. One was to take a random selection of the society's premises, to visit these premises on suitable days and to select shoppers just at the door of the premises with as much randomness as possible. Defects in this method are apparent: the probable un-randomness of choice, the omission of members who save and rarely shop, or members who have a weekly delivery made.

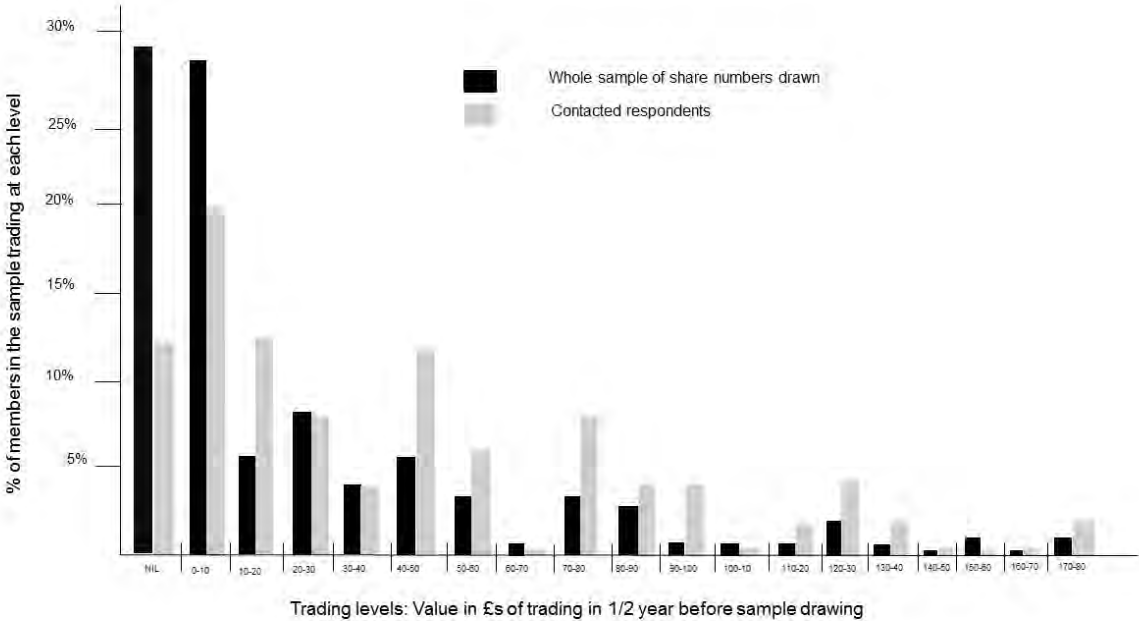


Nevertheless, considerable defects became apparent in the method selected. Many addresses, which were given to the society when the member joined, were very old. Not only had street names been changed, and rehousing occurred, but many had otherwise moved inside or to outside the district. Some members had died, up to as much as ten years before. When it was seen to be very troublesome to pursue further a respondent, as much information as possible was found out about the causes of the untraceability. The society has a policy of combing the records about every six years to annul and redistribute “dead” share numbers. The Rules lay down criteria for such a decision. Many of the share numbers for which it was clearly established that the respondent was dead or had moved out of the district had credited to them trading for the half-year period to which the sample drawing information referred. A number of alternative explanations are available, but there would appear to be no simple way of deciding between them. It is true that most social surveys encounter a measure of non-response some of which proves to be intractable. Nevertheless, the level of non-response which could not be overcome was at a dangerously high level in this case.

The histogram [Figure 1, below] shows, for each level of trading with the society, two percentage values. The first column of each pair is a breakdown of the expenditure pattern of the whole society. It is based on information obtained for all the share numbers. The second column is the expenditure pattern of the respondents to the survey; those members who were actually contacted by the interviewers. There can be seen to be a difference between those contacted and the whole membership in this respect. The respondents were characterised by a higher level of trading than the whole membership.

It will also be seen that over half of the total sample drawn traded at a rate lower than £10 per half-year. Almost a third of those contacted traded at a similarly low level. It may be that some share numbers found to be effectively “dead” were being accidentally traded on. But it is certainly possible to draw tentative implications for some of the democratic processes in retail societies. The histogram would indicate that many of the members are ineligible for nomination to management boards because of their low trading with their society. This would be a comment upon their ability to participate fully should the occasion arise.

Figure 1: Levels of trading with society [re-coloured and labelled]



The low level of response, as described above, is partly caused by factors which prejudice democratic processes which depended in any way on contacting members by post. They would also seriously reduce postal promotional efforts carried out by societies.

Of course, it is up to the member to inform his society of any change of address. That this is apparently not done is understandable. It does not solve the researchers' problem of avoiding time-wasting and the often fruitless expenditure of resources and energy. There are perhaps two possible solutions. One, which is the less preferable, is the method known as quota sampling, based in this case on geographical clustering. The other is to stratify a random sample of share numbers by the level of trading done on each number. The sample would be drawn as has been described above but would then be weighted away from low trading numbers. On the assumption that the society studied in this case is not atypical, a higher trading level indicates the greater probability of contact and response.

## The Author

John Whitfield was a research officer in the Nuffield Research Unit in Statistical Sociology at the University of Keele.

## References

- Co-operative Independent Commission (1958). Report (Chair — Rt Hon H. T. N. Gaitskell, CBE., MP.). Co-operative Union Ltd. [Digital copy]. Internet Archive. <https://archive.org/details/CooperativeIndependentCommissionReport1958/page/n1/mode/2up>
- Ostergaard, G.M., & Currell, M. (1960). The active minority. *Agenda*, June, 38-49.
- Ostergaard, G.M., & Halsey, A.H. (1965). *Power in co-operatives: A study of the politics of British Retail Societies*. Basil Blackwell.

## Notes

*Agenda* – was a magazine for members of Co-operative committees running from 1953-1967.

This article was originally published in the *Society for Co-operative Studies Bulletin*, 2, December 1969, pp. 13-17.



# Co-operative Staff Education Training — Guidelines for the Future

**R. L. Marshall**

The Co-operative Congress 1967 received a Report of a Working Party on Staff Education and Training — and asked that, in 1968, it should have before it an account of what had been done and what was proposed to put the recommendations into effect. The Society for Co-operative Studies has a direct concern with the area of interest of the Working Party, and a summary will be useful though this will have difficulty in accommodating fairly the range and variety of the recommendations.

The Report is first a record of the system and service built up already by the Education Department and the College in staff education and training. This, of course, the Working Party found imperfect and incomplete but still unsurpassed in its scope, depth, and quality of provision by any other section of the retail trade.

Next, it identifies significant changes in needs and conditions which staff education and training has to meet in the present and future and finds these in the general economic and social pattern, in the organisation of retail distribution, and in the Movement itself. In essence, the Movement now exists within a setting of economic and social changes which are eroding the attitudes, and practices, on which societies in the past have depended. More particularly, in the midst of these changes, the Movement faces competition of a new scale and urgency; from widely, and often nationally based, organisations in distribution drawing great financial resources from the banks, insurance houses, investment trusts, etc., and therefore able to employ the latest techniques of organisation, marketing, advertising, etc. In response to this challenge, the Movement is adapting itself along three lines: new constitution and organisation for the wholesale societies; fewer and larger retail societies; and a new relation between the wholesale and retail societies.

Then — and most crucially — the Working Party had the task of indicating the response which staff education and training ought to make to these new conditions. I shall try to set out some of the main elements in this response.

The Working Party took the implicit view of staff education and training that it belonged to a factor of production.

It is one of the things required for making a commodity or carrying out a service and the cost of the commodity or service will be the prices of all the factors of production, including the price of the education and training of labour. That, of course, raises questions and efforts of measurement which the Working Party did not have time to pursue. How much money, for example, should be invested in staff education and training — by comparison with investment in other factors of production? What is the productivity of investment in staff education and training if this can be realistically assessed? More particularly, what forms of staff education and training give the best productivity for the money invested?

The Working Party did not pursue these questions, though it would have acknowledged their relevance. It proceeded on the assumption that education and training was not something to be afforded after the processes of production had been completed and had made a profit; it is part of that process of production — and from that view of it were derived some of the main guidelines which the Report sets down.

*First the guidelines — only large societies have the certainty of resources adequate for investment in labour training — as for investment in other factors of production.*

We accept as part of the case for the integration of societies that only such re-organisation can provide the capital to invest in new sites and new buildings, etc. By the same token only such societies can provide labour training with the staff and facilities it needs. In effect:

- (a) It is the responsibility of the local society to have a continuous policy of recruitment, training and education, assessment, and promotion. Central agencies like the Education Department of the Union and the College can serve and supplement that local responsibility — but cannot replace it.
- (b) That local task can be carried out locally only if we have “fewer and larger societies”.

*Secondly, the guideline — that the training of labour as a factor of production can refine and develop that labour, but it cannot change its character or potential.*

In effect, it is more important to recruit the right people than to train them in the right way. We have long recognised the situation in which much of the ability which used to emerge from our schools at the minimum school-leaving age is now going on to the upper reaches of the school system and of the universities. Our recruitment policies have not moved to keep pace fully with these changes and a consequence of the social improvement we helped to achieve has been the impoverishment of the human quality entering our service. To help in the response that needs to be made, the Department and College have instituted two schemes — Training for Branch Management, and the Senior Management Development Scheme, particularly for recruitment from Universities and colleges of full-time study, both of which the Working Party reports in some detail. The Report urges that these two schemes be developed and the financial arrangements accepted by the Movement. It adds that the effort of recruitment needs to be completed by a scheme for an intermediate grade: the recruitment of school leavers with “A” levels or a substantial number of “O” levels. Information is being collected of projects already in this area — and Scunthorpe and Nottingham Societies have indicated their willingness to join with the Department and College in further experiment.

*The third guideline — that as far as possible, the Movement should use the facilities provided wholly or partly as a public charge by other bodies and reserve its own resources for investment in distinctive education and training which the Movement needs, and no other agencies will offer.*

Already, of course, we draw very substantially on the provisions, for example, of local education authorities; on the technical colleges for the provisions of courses for our employees; or at the Co-operative College on awards by local authorities to students.

The Working Party seeks further development and here are some examples:

- (a) That the Department and College share fully in the explorations that are now taking place about the establishment of “common” courses in distributive salesmanship and management which might accommodate many or all sections of the retail trade.
- (b) That there should be more concentration by the Department and College on training, as distinguished from education, i.e., on short intensive courses dealing with specialized aspects of work on all levels of Co-operative service.
- (c) That these training provisions should give more attention to the needs of practising officials. In effect, if the resources for investment in this factor of production are limited, as they are, and if a choice has to be made, then there should be some concentration on the higher reaches of responsibility. So, for example, the Department and College are considering at present seminars in marketing for chief officials and departmental managers: to be provided at regional centres throughout the country: to consist of two days devoted to case studies, management games, etc., to be followed by an interval in which the participants try out the techniques that have been dealt with, and then to be completed by one day for a report-back session.

- (d) That our investment in staff education and training should, to the fullest possible extent, be replenished from any sources available to it — and, in particular, from the Distributive Industries Training Board which is to be set up in 1968. Accordingly, the Working Party urges readiness to seek approval for all courses for Co-operative staff for the grant aid which the Board can be expected to make available.

*Fourthly, the guideline — that investment in labour training should involve those who are professionally responsible for all the factors of production.*

(a) Locally

The Report, of course, urges that the Committee responsible in the local society for staff education and training should be the Board of Directors; and that the task should be professionally carried out by full-time officers responsible to the chief officials within the management structures of the societies.

(b) Nationally

The recommendations of the Working Party on national organisation have these aspects:

- (i) That the Education Executive should retain its general responsibility for the whole area of Co-operative education — for staff, for members and for youth. This acknowledges the claims of Co-operative democracy.
- (ii) That under the Executive, however, there should be a specialist national committee with a positive responsibility for planning, estimating, and submitting to the Executive the programme for staff education and training.

The sub-committees should include these elements:

- representatives from the officials' associations
  - co-option of individuals from inside and outside the Movement.
- (iii) That the specialist committee should have strong representation from the wholesale societies. It was regarded as essential by the Working Party that the economic unity that is being increasingly shown between the wholesale and retail societies should be reflected in unity in directing and exercising staff education and training.

These proposals will, of course, be subject to much debate: they are an effort by the Working Party to reconcile democratic responsibility and professional involvement in this area of Co-operative development.

*Fifthly, the guideline generally but fairly drawn — that, if the Movement wishes adaptations of this kind, then it must accept the financial consequences, particularly in retaining and recruiting staff of the number and quality needed.*

And this is accompanied by precise indication of some of the changes needed.

For the Society, the Report has a warm commendation and a relevance at many different points. This is logical as well as welcome. A general theme throughout the Report is that the Co-operative Movement should become more and more outward-looking, seeking interest and scrutiny for its achievements and problems from individuals and institutions outside itself, and the Society can encourage and help to reward that attitude.

## **The Author**

R. L. Marshall OBE., MA., was secretary and treasurer of the Society for Co-operative Studies, and Chief Education Officer of the Co-operative Union.

## **Note**

This article was first published in the *Society of Co-operative Studies Bulletin*, 2, December 1969, pp. 18-21.

## Notes for Contributors to the Journal

The *Journal of Co-operative Studies* is a peer reviewed international academic journal which aims to promote research, knowledge and innovation within the co-operative sector. The *Journal* is published by the UK Society for Co-operative Studies in Manchester, England, a city strongly associated with the co-operative movement since the days of the Rochdale Pioneers. It is distributed in Canada in partnership with the Canadian Association of Studies in Co-operation and in Ireland in co-operation with the Irish Society for Co-operative Studies.

The editors welcome contributions on most aspects of co-operation, co-operative management, governance and leadership and related subject areas in relation to a range of co-operative sectors. This includes worker, consumer, retail, housing, credit, insurance, information technology, environmental and other forms of co-operative endeavour; international co-operation; and other sectors within the social economy including mutual businesses, co-operative banks and building societies, community businesses, and member-based non-profits.

We operate a “green” open access policy. This allows authors to self-archive a copy of their accepted manuscript (the final, peer reviewed edit of a paper without the publisher’s formatting/ typeset etc) in their institutional repository. This version of the paper is subject to an embargo period of six months after it is published in the Journal. After this time, it will be made publicly available on the Journal website and can made available via the author repository.

While one role of the *Journal* is the dissemination of the results of research, we are keen to ensure that its contents should also reflect the role of the UK Society for Co-operative Studies in acting as a bridge between academics and practitioners in advancing knowledge and understanding of co-operation. There are four ways of contributing:

1. **Articles of 4,000-7,000 words** which, either by reporting the results of empirical research or through developing theoretical perspectives will contribute to knowledge about co-operation and related subject areas. These articles will be subject to anonymous peer review by two specialist referees. Authors are invited to submit an outline proposal for discussion.
2. **Shorter articles, generally of around 2,000 words** which are assessed on the basis of their general interest and readability. Such articles are not subject to formal peer review although the editor may seek comments and suggestions from members of the Editorial Advisory Board which would be discussed with the author as part of the editing process.
3. **Think Pieces:** we invite prospective contributors to submit very short (maximum 1,000 word) articles which may be controversial or somewhat speculative in character. Their purpose should be to stimulate discussion and possible future new directions for co-operative research.
4. **Reviews and review articles;** the former should be between 600 and 1,000 words, the latter 2,000 words.

### Submission Guidelines

Submission guidelines for authors can be found on the UKSCS website:

<https://www.ukscs.coop/pages/77-submission-guidelines-for-authors>

Authors are advised to read and follow the guidelines as these outline the Journal house style, referencing and format. If guidelines are not followed this may result in a paper being returned to the author(s) and/or delay in publication.

Submissions should be submitted in MS Word or RTF format, attached to an email to:

editor@ukscs.coop



# Archives Reprint Series 2021

[www.ukscs.coop](http://www.ukscs.coop)