

## Expanded abstract

# Stability in small cooperatives in Mexico City. An analysis from the perspective of solid modernity and the Social and Solidarity Economy

The Social and Solidarity Economy in the urban environment of Mexico City was expanded from the conditions of unemployment and labor precariousness generated by liquid modernity from its beginnings. The search for labor stability necessarily takes us back to the times of the Welfare State, which contributed to the construction of a sense of community in the urban environment. The objective of this research was to analyze proximity or distance to the characteristics of work in the liquid and solid modernity and the Social and Solidarity Economy of small family cooperatives in Mexico City. The questions to be answered in this article are: Are the working conditions that were present in the Welfare State the same as those proposed to be achieved by the Social and Solidarity Economy? And, being two different theoretical frameworks, what then are the particularities of work in the Social and Solidarity Economy?

The research methodology was mixed, quantitative for the selection of cooperatives that met two requirements: appropriate cooperative management and economic viability, this was done through a discriminant analysis, a multivariate statistical technique. The database used to perform the discriminations was that of the 2015 “Economic Diagnosis on Cooperativism of the Federal District”, with 192 cooperatives representative at 90% confidence of 1,589. The methodology was developed in detail in Luvían, Rosas, and Ramírez (2019) from the crossings resulted in 22 cooperatives with the economic viability and 130 with appropriate cooperative management, from which 12 cooperatives were reached that met both criteria. However, for reasons of accessibility, only eight could be interviewed. The qualitative methodology considered the theoretical approach to determine the categories of analysis and thematic axes of the interviews: capital-labor, space-time, and community and individual. The principles for internal management were taken from cooperativism: democratic control, democratic participation, and autonomy and independence; with emphasis on democracy through the organization chart (General Assembly, Board of Directors, and Supervisory Board). The interviews were applied to the legal representatives of the cooperatives. The responses were analyzed employing the categorization method to process the text of the interviews through categories and subcategories and thus present through words or short phrases the similarities and differences of the interviewees through the themes and components of the topic. The categories were organized through networks with the Atlas ti.8 software, examining mainly aspects such as the basis and density of the networks with the co-occurrence method.

The results show that cooperatives present stability conditions like those existing in solid modernity such as: maintaining the equivalent of a fixed salary, having a stable workplace, fixed working hours, and forming a social welfare fund. However, there are fundamental differences in the way these conditions of stability are achieved in the Social and Solidarity Economy, which have to do with the organization of work within cooperatives. The main difference between work in solid modernity and work in the Social and Solidarity Economy is the existence of emancipated work. Emancipated work is a work of unique characteristics, it is not exploited work, since the ownership of the means of production of the cooperative is collective, it is not subordinated either because decisions are taken horizontally and mainly by consensus; it is not sanctioned, its fulfillment is given practically by the feeling of community of the cooperative; it is a work that allows creativity and human development.

The literature supports the evidence that stability generates predictability and long-term planning due to the commitment of the members; this condition is present in cooperative management thanks to the existence of emancipated labor. In the long term, the space-time relationship of half of the cooperatives that operate with generational change in a family manner stands out. Future planning has been translated into concrete strategies for market growth, improvement of infrastructure, equipment, and use of the principle of open membership, by recovering the creativity of the members in the General Assembly.

The research distinguishes two types of members, the leaders who act to guarantee collective stability through their shared commitment, direction, empathy, and recognition of the work done, which legitimizes them, and the followers who support the leaders' efforts to maintain labor stability; both under a social relationship that is not based on surplus value. It is argued that the cooperatives have the capacity to make decisions shared because the consequences derive from the work of both. In the analyzed cooperatives there are no restrictions to the deployment of leadership, the results show a better positioning of the cooperatives that have more leaders because having more members involved in management enhances democratic participation and collectively acquired knowledge. This was exemplified by the activities of the management positions of the Board of Directors and Supervisory Board, which, following the law and commitment to the organization, contribute strategically to production, commercialization, and sound accounting, activities on which the conditions of stability depend (although there are also leading members without management positions).

The limitation of the research has to do with the number of cooperatives interviewed and the characteristics of qualitative research, which prevents the results from being generalized to other cooperatives in Mexico City, other states, or the country. However, the results are theoretically framed in the structural tendencies experienced by the subjects of liquid modernity in neoliberalism, so they can be a reference. The originality and implications of the work lie in recognizing the ambivalence in the rationality of the subjects, when identifying the coexisting modernities to know what makes the stability of cooperatives possible in the urban environment, even when apparently only individualism and competition could prevail. On the other hand, emancipated work is a category little explored in the Social and Solidarity Economy, it emerged from both theoretical and applied analysis and made it possible to examine par-

ticularities that are deployed from the form of organization and management presented by cooperatives that adhere to a greater extent to the principles and cooperative organization. Emancipated work requires the collective control of the means of production typical of the Social and Solidarity Economy to advance towards an alternative economy and contributes to creative and democratic work that improves the living conditions of the partners and consequently their own life, and even those of the following generations for the creation of loyalty, feelings of community, identity, and enjoyment of the fruits of work.

**Keywords:** Liquid modernity, solid modernity, cooperativism, Social and Solidarity Economy, labor uncertainty, labor stability, work.