

Performance Improvement Model for Cooperatives Through Reputation, Innovation, Cultural Transformation, and Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT

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Majalah Ilmiah Bijak

This study aims to analyze the influence of reputation, innovation, cultural transformation, and competitive advantage on improving the performance of cooperatives in West Java Province. Using the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory approach, this study positions reputation, innovation, and cultural transformation as strategic resources that can drive competitive advantage and enhance cooperative performance. The research methodology employs a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Data were collected through surveys distributed to cooperative managers and members in West Java. The variables measured include organizational reputation, innovation levels, cultural transformation implementation, competitive advantage, and cooperative performance. The findings reveal that reputation has a significant impact on innovation and cultural transformation. Innovation has been proven to enhance the competitive advantage of cooperatives, while cultural transformation strengthens the relationship between reputation and organizational performance. Competitive advantage serves as an important mediator in improving the overall performance of cooperatives. The practical implications of this study underscore the necessity for cooperatives to strengthen their reputation through transparency and openness, promote innovation based on member needs, and adopt adaptive work cultures in response to change. Governments and stakeholders are also expected to provide strategic support through policies that foster cooperative development as a pillar of community economic empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Cooperatives are one of the economic institutions that play a strategic role in supporting community economic development, particularly in developing countries like Indonesia. According to Law No. 25 of 1992, a cooperative is a business entity based on the principles of kinship and people's economy, aiming to improve the welfare of its members and society. However, despite their significant potential, cooperatives in Indonesia still face various challenges that hinder their performance improvement (Sumarlin et al., 2024).

One of the main challenges cooperatives face is their low reputation in the eyes of the public. Cooperatives are often perceived as less competitive compared to other financial institutions, such as banks or non-bank financial institutions. Research shows that a good reputation can enhance public and member trust, which in turn positively impacts organizational performance (Anastasopoulos et al., 2019;

Ramos & Ellitan, 2022). Conversely, a poor reputation can hinder cooperatives in accessing markets and gaining support from stakeholders.

In addition to reputation, innovation is also a crucial factor in enhancing the competitiveness of cooperatives. Innovation enables cooperatives to adapt to changing member needs and market dynamics, as well as create new products or services that add value (Bereznoi, 2015; Fink et al., 2024). However, many cooperatives in Indonesia still struggle to adopt technology and develop innovative business models, often due to limited resources and management capabilities (Rustariyuni, 2022).

Cultural transformation is another key element in improving cooperative performance. An adaptive and collaborative organizational culture can foster innovation, enhance operational effectiveness, and strengthen relationships with members (Tuan & Dung, 2024). Nevertheless, many cooperatives still adhere to traditional mindsets and practices, which hinder their ability to compete in an increasingly competitive market (Sumantri et al., 2023).

Within the framework of the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, internal resources such as reputation, innovation, and organizational culture can be considered strategic assets that support the achievement of competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Mailani et al., 2024; Smith et al., 2013). This study seeks to explore the relationship between reputation, innovation, cultural transformation, and competitive advantage in improving the performance of cooperatives in West Java Province. Using a quantitative approach, this research is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to cooperative development, as well as offer relevant strategies to enhance the competitiveness of cooperatives in Indonesia.

West Java Province was chosen as the focus of this research because it has the highest number of cooperatives in Indonesia, with over 24,000 registered cooperatives across 27 regencies and cities (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). This region represents a dynamic economic environment with strong community-based enterprises, making it a strategic locus to analyze cooperative performance. Despite this quantitative dominance, many cooperatives in West Java still face structural and managerial challenges that hinder their competitiveness and sustainability. These include limited innovation capacity, weak organizational reputation, and resistance to cultural change.

The urgency of this research lies in addressing the performance gap faced by cooperatives, particularly in the face of increasing market competition and digital transformation. As cooperatives are expected to contribute significantly to inclusive economic development and grassroots empowerment, understanding the key internal factors—such as reputation, innovation, and cultural transformation—that drive their performance is critical. This study aims to fill the gap in empirical studies linking these strategic factors to competitive advantage and performance outcomes, especially within the cooperative sector in Indonesia.

2. METHODS

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory is a widely used framework for understanding an organization's competitive advantage based on its internal resources (Barney, 1991; Mailani et al., 2024). RBV emphasizes the importance of resources that are rare, unique, valuable, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable in creating sustainable competitive advantage (Zimuto & Zvarimwa, 2022). In the context of cooperatives, reputation, innovation, and cultural transformation can be considered strategic assets that enhance organizational competitiveness. Recent research indicates that cooperatives that optimally leverage their internal resources are more likely to survive and thrive in a competitive environment (Sumantri et al., 2023; Tuan & Dung, 2024).

Organizational Reputation

This Organizational reputation is defined as the public's or stakeholders' perception of an organization's credibility, performance, and integrity (Anastasopoulos et al., 2019). In cooperatives, a good reputation enhances member trust, facilitates access to strategic partners, and strengthens relationships with the broader community (Hatak et al., 2016; Majee & Hoyt, 2009; Takács et al., 2021). Research by (Baumgartner et al., 2022) confirms that organizational reputation serves as an intangible

asset that influences the organization's relationships with stakeholders. Conversely, a poor reputation can erode member trust and hinder organizational performance (Kähkönen et al., 2021). In the context of Indonesian cooperatives, reputation is often associated with adherence to cooperative principles, transparency, and social contributions.

Innovation and Competitive Advantage

Innovation is the process of creating or developing new products, services, or processes that add value (Bereznoy, 2019; Toriola et al., 2022). In cooperatives, innovation often includes adopting information technology to improve operational efficiency, developing new financial products, or innovating marketing strategies (Damanpour, 2020). Research indicates that innovation has a direct relationship with competitive advantage, especially for cooperatives operating in highly competitive markets (Freund et al., 2021). Innovation also enables cooperatives to meet member needs more effectively, enhance satisfaction, and expand their membership base.

Cultural Transformation

Cultural transformation refers to changes in values, mindsets, and behaviours within an organization to improve responsiveness to external challenges (Nurhalim et al., 2022). In cooperatives, cultural transformation involves fostering a work culture that supports innovation, openness to change, and collaboration between management and members. A study by Cao et al., (2025) shows that cooperatives that successfully implement cultural transformation tend to perform better, particularly in facing challenges such as globalization and digitalization. Cultural transformation also supports more effective strategy implementation, such as technology-based product development and strengthening stakeholder relationships.

Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method to analyse the relationships between reputation, innovation, cultural transformation, competitive advantage, and cooperative performance. The research model utilizes Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) as it enables the measurement of complex relationships between latent variables.

The research population consists of active cooperatives in West Java Province, with respondents comprising cooperative managers and members. Sampling was conducted using a purposive sampling technique, with the criteria that cooperatives must have held an Annual Members Meeting (RAT) at least twice in the past two years and have a minimum of 50 members. The targeted sample size ranges between 150–200 respondents.

Validity and reliability were assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Cronbach's Alpha values. Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to test the structural model. This study tests the hypothesis that reputation, innovation, and cultural transformation have a positive influence on competitive advantage, which in turn enhances cooperative performance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

West Java Province consists of 27 regencies/cities, with a total area of 35,377.76 km², 626 sub-districts, and 5,962 urban/rural villages (BPS Statistics of West Java Province). As for cooperatives, West Java has 24,048 cooperatives distributed across its 27 regencies/cities. The distribution can be seen as follows:

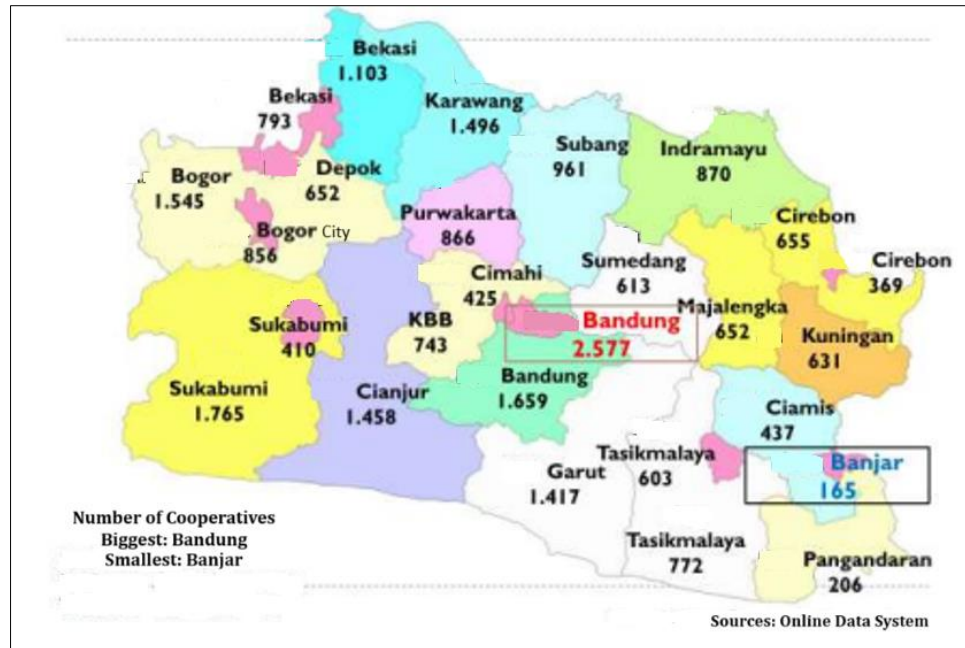


Figure 1. Cooperative Mapping Map in West Java Region

Results and Discussion

This study analyzes the influence of reputation, innovation, cultural transformation, and competitive advantage on the performance of cooperatives in West Java Province. Based on data analysis, several key findings were obtained:

1. Reputation

Descriptive test results indicate that cooperatives have a good reputation, with the highest responses for the indicator "quality products and services" (mean = 4.478), followed by "trustworthiness" (mean = 4.439) and "strong support for social activities" (mean = 4.451). The reputation of cooperatives is considered a key factor in building trust and a positive public image.

2. Innovation

Cooperatives have demonstrated innovation capabilities, particularly in "new product development" and "technology adoption." The highest scores were for the indicators "willingness to experiment with new ideas" (mean = 4.567) and "developing market-driven products" (mean = 4.523), indicating that cooperatives actively strive to meet member needs through relevant innovations.

3. Cultural Transformation

Cultural transformation in cooperatives reflects positive changes, with indicators such as "development of new norms and values" and "collaborative strategies" achieving high mean scores. This suggests that cooperatives recognize the importance of an adaptive culture in enhancing competitiveness.

4. Competitive Advantage

The competitive advantage of cooperatives primarily stems from "products offering greater customer benefits" (mean = 4.481) and "lower manufacturing costs compared to competitors" (mean = 4.396). These advantages highlight cooperatives' ability to create unique value that is difficult for competitors to replicate.

5. Cooperative Performance

Cooperative performance shows positive results, with indicators such as "sales growth" and "customer satisfaction" at satisfactory levels. This indicates that the strategies implemented by cooperatives have effectively supported both financial and social objectives.

Results of Statistical Testing and Measurement Model Design

This study employed a quantitative approach using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) for data analysis. Validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the research instruments met high confidence standards.

Validity and Reliability Tests

1. Construct Validity Test

The construct validity test results indicate that all indicators in this study have outer loadings above 0.70, confirming that these indicators effectively measure their respective latent variables.

2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion Test

The analysis shows that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each variable exceeds 0.50, demonstrating good discriminant validity.

3. Reliability Test

The test results reveal that both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values for all variables are above 0.70, indicating strong reliability for all variables in this study.

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha, CR, AVE

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Reputation	0.823	0.891	0.671
Innovation	0.812	0.880	0.658
Culture Transformation	0.835	0.902	0.689
Competitive Advantage	0.798	0.873	0.644
Cooperative Performance	0.841	0.915	0.701

Hypothesis Testing Results

Based on the results of data analysis obtained from this study, hypothesis testing was carried out using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. The results of hypothesis testing are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing Results

No	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value	Conclusion
H1	Reputation has a positive effect on Innovation	0.542	7.102	0.000	Accepted
H2	Reputation has a positive effect on Cultural Transformation	0.498	6.859		Accepted
H3	Reputation has a positive effect on Competitive Advantage	0.401	5.230		Accepted
H4	Reputation has a positive effect on Cooperative Performance	0.362	4.987		Accepted
H5	Innovation has a positive effect on Competitive Advantage	0.610	8.341		Accepted
H6	Cultural Transformation has a positive effect on Competitive Advantage	0.535	7.453		Accepted
H7	Competitive Advantage has a positive effect on Cooperative Performance	0.578	9.122		Accepted
H8	Cultural Transformation has a positive effect on Cooperative Performance	0.462	6.104		Accepted

Interpretation of Results

1. Reputation and Innovation The test results show that cooperative reputation has a positive and significant effect on innovation. This indicates that cooperatives with a good reputation are more likely to develop innovation in their products, services, and business models.

2. Reputation and Cultural Transformation Cultural transformation in cooperatives is positively influenced by a strong reputation. Cooperatives with a good image tend to be more adaptive in facing changes and renewing their organizational culture.
3. Reputation and Competitive Advantage Reputation also has a significant effect on competitive advantage, which means that cooperatives with a good image are able to create valuable differentiation in the market.
4. Reputation and Cooperative Performance These findings confirm that organizational reputation plays an important role in improving cooperative performance, which is reflected in member growth, increased income, and member loyalty.
5. Innovation and Competitive Advantage Innovation is a major factor in creating a cooperative's competitive advantage. Cooperatives that continue to innovate in products and services have higher competitiveness.
6. Cultural Transformation and Competitive Advantage Cultural transformation carried out by cooperatives has been shown to have a positive impact on competitive advantage. This shows that cooperatives that adapt to changes in the business environment can compete more effectively.
7. Competitive Advantage and Cooperative Performance The results of the study show that competitive advantage of cooperatives is the main factor that improves overall cooperative performance. This indicates that cooperatives that are able to maintain competitive advantage will achieve better performance.
8. Cultural Transformation and Cooperative Performance Cultural transformation contributes significantly to improving cooperative performance, indicating that an innovative and adaptive culture can drive cooperative growth.

Measurement Model Design

The measurement model in this study uses Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure that the indicators used actually measure the intended construct. The measurement model is designed to test the relationship between Reputation, Innovation, Cultural Transformation, Competitive Advantage, and Cooperative Performance.

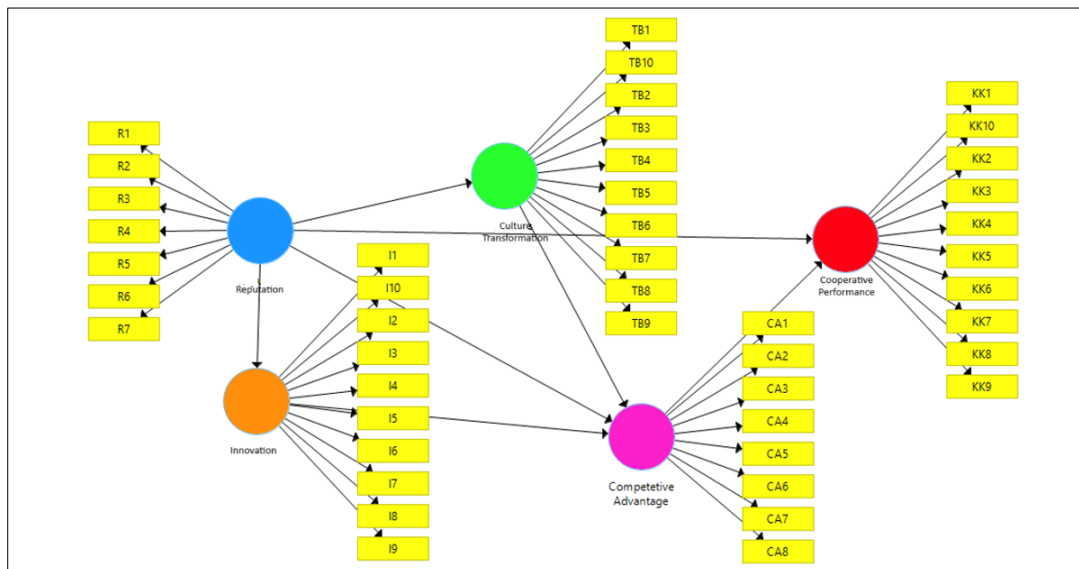


Figure 3. Measurement Model Design

The following is an overview of the measurement model used:

1. Reputation is measured through perceptions of service quality, transparency, and cooperative image.
2. Innovation is assessed based on new product development, technology implementation, and adaptation to market changes.

3. Cultural Transformation includes new work norms, openness to change, and adaptive leadership patterns.
4. Competitive Advantage involves differentiation strategies, cost efficiency, and service excellence.
5. Cooperative Performance is measured through member growth, profitability, and member satisfaction.
6. With the results of these statistical tests, it can be concluded that the model used in this study has good validity and reliability for further analysis.

Discussion

The findings of this study are in line with previous research. Anastasopoulos et al., (2019) and (Fink et al., 2024) highlighted that organizational reputation is an intangible asset that builds trust and improves stakeholder engagement, which is evident in the cooperatives in West Java. Similarly, innovation as a driver of competitive advantage has been supported by Mailani et al., (2024 and Sumantri et al., (2023), who emphasized that innovation enables organizations to adapt to market dynamics and generate sustainable growth. The results also align with (Nurhalim et al., 2022), who found that cultural transformation improves organizational responsiveness and competitiveness, which is consistent with how cooperatives in this study respond to change.

This study contributes theoretically by strengthening the application of the Resource-Based View (RBV) in the cooperative sector, highlighting the importance of intangible resources such as reputation, innovation, and organizational culture. Practically, the results provide strategic insights for cooperative leaders and policymakers. To improve performance, cooperatives must not only strengthen their reputation but also invest in innovation and adopt adaptive organizational cultures. Policymakers and stakeholders should also facilitate this transformation by creating supportive policies, financial assistance, and capacity-building programs to enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of cooperatives in Indonesia.

The results of this study support the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which emphasizes the importance of unique resources such as reputation and innovation to create competitive advantage. A good cooperative reputation has been shown to increase the trust of members and the community, which in turn strengthens competitive advantage through product differentiation and quality services. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2021), the number of active cooperatives in West Java Province reached 15,621 units, an increase from the previous year which was recorded at 14,706 units in 2020 and 13,247 units in 2019. This increase shows that cooperatives are increasingly developing as economic institutions that are trusted by the community.

Cooperative Reputation and Its Impact on Performance Based on the descriptive data analysis in this study, cooperative reputation has a significant relationship with increased performance. The results of the descriptive test show that the highest reputation indicator is "quality products and services" with a mean value of 4.478, followed by "trustworthy" (4.439) and "full support for social activities" (4.451). This indicates that cooperatives with a good reputation are better able to attract new members and maintain the loyalty of existing members.

Innovation as a Strengthening Factor for Competitive Advantage The results of the innovation analysis show that cooperatives in West Java are increasingly adopting innovation in their operations. The indicator "trying new ideas" obtained the highest mean value of 4,567, followed by "developing products according to market needs" (4,523). In line with this, data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs shows that the contribution of cooperatives to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from 4.48% in 2017 to 6.20% in 2021. This increase shows that cooperatives are increasingly able to compete with other financial institutions through product and service innovation.

Cultural Transformation and Adaptation of Cooperatives to Change The cultural transformation of cooperatives in West Java shows significant changes in work patterns and organizational culture. The indicators "development of new norms and values" and "collaborative strategies" have high mean values, indicating that cooperatives are increasingly aware of the importance of adaptive culture in supporting competitiveness. Several large cooperatives in West Java, such as the Rukun Mekar Savings and Loan Cooperative (KSP) and the Sawargi Village Unit Cooperative (KUD), have implemented

organizational culture changes by increasing member involvement in decision-making and digitizing financial services.

Competitive Advantage as a Mediator of Cooperative Performance Competitive advantage has been shown to be a significant mediator between reputation, innovation, cultural transformation, and cooperative performance. The indicator "products that provide more benefits to customers" scored 4,481, while "manufacturing costs are lower than competitors" scored 4,396. This indicates that cooperatives that have successfully increased their competitive advantage are able to expand their market share and increase member satisfaction.

Cooperative Performance in West Java Data shows that the performance of cooperatives in West Java has experienced positive growth, with the indicators "sales growth" and "customer satisfaction" at satisfactory levels. However, challenges still exist, especially in terms of limited capital and access to modern technology. Based on data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (2023), of the 127,124 active cooperatives in Indonesia, only 47,115 cooperatives routinely hold annual member meetings (RAT), indicating that there are still problems in cooperative governance.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that reputation, innovation, cultural transformation, and competitive advantage significantly affect the performance of cooperatives in West Java Province. A good reputation helps cooperatives build trust among members and the community, which then facilitates the implementation of innovation and cultural transformation. Innovation is proven to be an important element in creating competitive advantage through new product development, technology adoption, and increased efficiency. Cultural transformation, which includes changes in cooperative values and mindsets, directly improves competitive advantage and cooperative performance. Competitive advantage plays an important role as a mediator in linking reputation, innovation, and cultural transformation with cooperative performance. Overall, this study confirms that the combination of these factors contributes significantly to achieving better cooperative performance, especially in terms of financial stability, member satisfaction, and organizational growth.

Suggestion

To improve performance, cooperatives need to focus on strengthening their reputation through the implementation of transparency, openness, and consistent service. Cooperatives are also advised to encourage innovation by utilizing digital technology and providing training for administrators and members. In addition, cultural transformation that supports adaptation, collaboration, and openness to change needs to be implemented to strengthen the competitiveness of cooperatives. The government and stakeholders are expected to provide support in the form of access to financing, management training, and incentive policies to encourage cooperatives to be more innovative and competitive. Further research is advised to expand the scope of the research area and add external variables such as government policies or market conditions to provide a more comprehensive view of the factors that influence cooperative performance.

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