



## Internationalization of Higher Education Cooperatives: Economic, Legal, Health, and Technology Synergy through PKM in Malaysia

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### Abstract

International community service (PKM) is a tangible manifestation of the involvement of universities in bridging science with practice in the field across countries. This activity was carried out through a mock study and collaboration between Indonesian Higher Education Cooperatives and cooperative institutions in Malaysia, involving economic, legal, health, and technological aspects.

"The partners of international PKM activities are the Universiti Malaya Alumni Cooperative (KAGUMI) and the Universiti Teknologi MARA Cooperative (UiTM), with the support of the ANGKASA federation as the Malaysian national cooperative organization." The purpose of the activity is to strengthen the institutional capacity of higher education cooperatives in facing the era of globalization and increase the competitiveness of members at the regional level. The methods used are in the form of Focus Group Discussion (FGD), institutional visits, observation of cooperative practices in the field, and the preparation of multidisciplinary-based action plans involving the fields of economics, law, health, and information technology. The results of the activity show that the internationalization of university cooperatives can be carried out through strengthening cross-border networks, the application of cooperative governance principles based on modern law, the use of digital technology for marketing and administration, and the development of value-added local health and economic products. In conclusion, this international PKM opens up opportunities for academic and practical synergy that are able to expand the role of higher education cooperatives in sustainable development, expand ASEAN cooperation networks, and support the role of academics as agents of transnational change.

**Keywords:** college cooperatives, internationalization, PKM, Malaysian ASEAN Cooperatives, multidisciplinary

## INTRODUCTION

"This international PKM activity is carried out in collaboration with ANGKASA (Angkatan Koperasi Kebangsaan Malaysia Berhad) based in Kuala Lumpur as the main partner. ANGKASA is the umbrella organization for cooperatives in Malaysia that plays an important role in strengthening the capacity of cooperatives, both in the fields of economics, law, health, and technology." (1)

Cooperatives as socio-economic entities in higher education environments have a dual role, namely as an instrument for the economic empowerment of students and campus staff



and as a means of learning entrepreneurial practices and institutional management. In the context of globalization and the increasing demands for internationalization of higher education, campus cooperatives can be developed as collaborative bridges across countries through Community Service (PKM) activities.(2)

The internationalization of university cooperatives not only reflects academic mobility and institutional networks, but also has a positive impact on global community development through a multidisciplinary approach encompassing economics, law, health, and technology. Furthermore, strengthening the role of cooperatives in the ASEAN context can create a regional cooperation ecosystem based on the values of inclusivity, solidarity, and sustainability (3).

Malaysia was chosen as the location for this international PKM implementation due to its strong historical, geographical, and cultural ties with Indonesia, particularly in the Johor Bahru region, which is home to a diverse Malay community. This presents a strategic opportunity to synergize the activities of Indonesian campus cooperatives with community cooperatives in Malaysia to enhance institutional competitiveness, knowledge exchange, and the use of digital technology in cooperative management (4).

University cooperatives play a strategic role as collective economic platforms based on the principles of togetherness and economic democracy. However, the challenges of globalization require cooperatives to focus not only on the local sphere but also on internationalization in governance, networking, and innovation. Malaysia was chosen as a partner for international PKM activities because the country has a strong tradition of cooperative development, particularly through ANGKASA (Angkatan Koperasi Kebangsaan Malaysia Berhad) and its established network of university cooperatives (5).

This PKM activity is carried out by a team of academics from various disciplines—economics, law, health, and technology—to encourage synergy in strengthening the institutional structure of Indonesian university cooperatives. This multidisciplinary approach is believed to produce a cooperative model that is adaptive, inclusive, and internationally competitive (6).

## METHOD

This PKM uses an approach **participatory-collaborative** with stages:

1. **Literature study and problem mapping university** cooperatives in Indonesia.
2. **Comparative study** to Malaysia, covering:
  - Visits to university cooperatives and KAGUMI (University of Malaya & UiTM Alumni Cooperative).
  - Discussion with ANGKASA regarding cooperative legal policies.



- Observation of the management of digital cooperatives and health business units.
- 3. **Focus Group Discussion (FGD)** cross-disciplinary to formulate recommendations for cooperative models.
- 4. **Preparation of action plan** internationalization of multidisciplinary-based university cooperatives.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Results of Literature Study and Mapping of Higher Education Cooperative Problems in Indonesia

Based on literature reviews and data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, university cooperatives in Indonesia have great potential, but face several fundamental challenges.

#### 1. Institutions and Governance

- Most university cooperatives still operate with conventional management systems and minimal digitalization.
- Accountability and transparency issues are challenges, especially in financial reporting and asset management.
- Member involvement (lecturers, educational staff, students, and alumni) is often still low.

#### 2. Economic Aspects

- The business units of university cooperatives are generally limited to convenience stores (campus department stores), canteens, or savings and loans.
- Not many have developed business units based on campus research innovation (healthy food products, health services, or digital technology).
- Competition with modern retail around campuses makes it difficult for many cooperatives to survive.

#### 3. Regulatory and Legal Aspects

- Some university cooperatives do not yet fully understand the latest cooperative regulations according to Law No. 25/1992 or the draft revision of the Cooperative Law.
- Weak understanding of the law makes cooperatives vulnerable to administrative disorder and risks in business management.

#### 4. Technological Aspects

- Minimal use of digital technology, both for administration, marketing, and member services.
- Only a small number of university cooperatives have membership applications, digital cashier systems, or e-commerce platforms.

#### 5. Human Resources (HR) Aspects

- Cooperative managers often hold multiple positions and do not have adequate managerial training.

- The lack of regeneration of cooperative cadres among students causes cooperatives not to develop sustainably.

### Problem Mapping Analysis

- **The main problem** Higher education cooperatives in Indonesia can be mapped into:
  1. Low professionalism and accountability of management.
  2. Weak innovation of business units that are relevant to member needs.
  3. Lack of utilization of digital technology.
  4. Lack of regulatory support and strong legal understanding.
  5. Limited human resources in cooperative management.
- **Impact** The problem is that many university cooperatives are not developing, and some are even inactive (only registered administratively).

#### B. Comparative study to Malaysia, including:

- Visit to the university cooperative and the ANGKASA Cooperative, Kuala Lumpur



Picture 1. The visit arrived in Malaysia

- Discussion with ANGKASA regarding cooperative legal policies.



Figure 2. Discussion with Angkasa Cooperative, Malaysia

■ Observation of the management of digital cooperatives and health business units.

**Table 1. Observation Results of Digital Cooperative Management and Health Business Units**

Aspect	Digital Cooperative Management (Malaysia – ANGKASA & University Cooperatives)	Health Business Unit (Malaysia – Cooperative Partners)	Implications for Indonesian Higher Education Cooperatives
<b>Administrati on System</b>	Using digital applications for financial records, membership, and online meetings.	Cooperative digital medical record system-based health service administration.	Need to adopt campus cooperative application for finance & member services.
<b>Financial Transactions</b>	Cashless system (QR Pay, e-wallet, digital bank transfer) integrated with members	Payment for health services can be made using the cooperative application.	Encourage the use of digital financial applications in university cooperatives.
<b>Member Services</b>	Member digital portal: check savings, loans, and SHU online	Cooperative clinics/pharmacies provide preventive health &	Need to build a college cooperative member portal

		pharmaceutical services to members	
<b>Products &amp; Business</b>	Cooperative e-commerce to sell campus products, alumni, and fostered MSMEs.	Herbal products, health supplements, and pharmaceuticals based on campus research.	Can develop online campus cooperative stores & health products resulting from student/lecturer research.
<b>Innovation &amp; Technology</b>	The cooperative mobile application is integrated with the banking system.	Simple cooperative-based telemedicine for member consultations.	Development of a campus cooperative application with basic health features (nutrition, online consultation).
<b>Human Resource Management</b>	Cooperative human resources are specially trained in digital marketing & IT management.	Health workers collaborate with community clinics & cooperative pharmacists.	Campus cooperatives need to involve health & technology students as cadres.

**C. Cross-disciplinary Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to formulate recommendations for cooperative models.**



**Figure 3. During FGD**



**D. Preparation of an action plan for the internationalization of multidisciplinary-based university cooperatives.**

**Table. Action Plan for the Internationalization of Multidisciplinary-Based Higher Education Cooperatives**

<b>Field</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Expected Output</b>
Economy	- Develop digital retail & e-commerce across borders - Indonesia–Malaysia business network	Increasing cooperative income & access to international markets
Law	- Prepare cooperative governance guidelines (GCG) - Implement regulation-based digital reporting	Governance is more transparent, accountable and in accordance with the law
Health	- Establish a cooperative health unit (campus clinic/pharmacy) - Herbal/nutrition production based on campus research	Preventive health services for members & product innovation
Technology	- Establish a cooperative health unit (campus clinic/pharmacy) - Herbal/nutrition production based on campus research	Full digitalization of cooperatives & efficiency of member services

**CONCLUSION**

The internationalization of university cooperatives through Student Creativity Program (PKM) in Malaysia has made a significant contribution to strengthening cooperative institutions in Indonesia. Multidisciplinary synergy provides recommendations for adaptive,



innovative, and globally competitive cooperative models. Going forward, the implementation of this action plan is expected to enhance the role of university cooperatives in sustainable economic development, member empowerment, and international networking.

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