

## GENERATING DYNAMIC ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITIES IN INTERVENTION STAGE OF A MANAGEMENT MODEL: EVIDENCE FROM COOPERATIVES IN JALISCO

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**Abstract:** This paper outlines a strategy designed to enhance the dynamic capabilities of cooperatives specialising in the tourism and fishing services in Jalisco, Mexico. This is the second article in a series developed from a project aimed at designing and implementing a management model to promote business development in rural areas of Jalisco. The initial article outlined the model's framework and shared early findings. At the outset, the cooperative members had limited academic backgrounds, resulting in gaps in organisational management capabilities, challenges in effective teamwork, and deficits in empathy and solidarity. As a response, the strategy prioritised training and support for the cooperatives, focusing on the development of organisational skills by means of accessible tools designed to strengthen their dynamic capabilities. The results demonstrated considerable progress in organisational management and the development of new business lines, contributing to the success of these cooperatives.


**Keywords:** business development, cooperatives, dynamic organisational capabilities

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## Introduction

The importance of cooperatives in the local economies of communities is undeniable; they are agents that contribute to the well-being of their members and the general population (European Economic & Social Committee, 2012; Sánchez et al., 2020). However, the challenges they face in remaining competitive in the market are numerous and varied, with the main ones related to human talent, management, a lack of business philosophy, inadequate brand image and advertising, in addition to a lack of adaptation and strategic planning (García et al., 2024).

It is essential to emphasise the significance of dynamic capabilities and their connection to cooperatives, as outlined by Teece et al. (1997). They describe these capacities as a combination of organisational, technical, service, administrative, leadership, and decision-making skills that an organisation can develop. Research on cooperatives in Jalisco, Mexico, has documented their presence across various sectors, including artisanal production, tourism, and fishing (Maldonado et al., 2015; González, 2020; Aranda et al., 2023).

There are gaps in research on the social and organisational factors that affect cooperatives, particularly in the formation and functioning of dynamic capabilities. There is a lack of studies that provide quantifiable measurements of social impact, the development of the social entrepreneurship process in cooperatives, as well as cooperative failure and its manifestations (Camargo Benavides & Ehrenhard, 2021; ICA, n.d.). Although there are isolated studies in Mexico and Latin America, evidence is lacking on how social cohesion, governance, internal structure, partner participation, and institutional networks affect their adaptation and competitiveness (Domínguez-Aguirre et al., 2025; González, 2020; Lajara-Camilleri & Server-Izquierdo, 2017).

This paper presents the third stage of five (diagnosis, design, intervention, evaluation, and continuous improvement) in the management model designed to promote business development in rural areas of Jalisco. Specifically, it focuses on the intervention stage, which involved training and support for business growth across four work teams of the cooperative “Las Puertas de Calderón” S.C. de R.L., located in the town of Plan de Calderón, within the municipality of Zapotlanejo, Jalisco, Mexico. The stages of the model are: in the first stage, a diagnosis of the problems of the cooperative is developed, in the second stage, the techniques and tools of accompaniment for the success of the project are developed together with the cooperative and the decision makers, while in the intervention stage, the techniques and tools of stage two are implemented. Subsequently, in stage four, the results are evaluated, and a comparison is made with the initial plan to build an action plan for improvement in stage five, thereby turning the application into a virtuous circle of business growth. The originality of the study lies in the fact that this phase is not limited to task execution but also promotes participatory intervention in which the members of the cooperative are active agents of change, who appropriate management tools and strengthen their business capacities through practice.

This study hypothesises that, through the implementation of this model – particularly the intervention stage for business development – dynamic capabilities can

be generated to enhance organisational efficiency and, in the medium and long term, improve the cooperative's conditions in addition to the well-being of its members, potentially benefiting their wider environment as well.

## **Literature review**

### **Cooperatives and their impact**

Cooperatives are a particular form of organisation based on the principles of associationism, but with a business structure and an economic and social purpose, centred on people and based on values. According to the International Cooperative Alliance [ICA], a cooperative is “an autonomous association of people who have voluntarily come together to address their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise” (ICA, 2025, p. 2). For the European Economic and Social Committee et al. (2012), cooperativism is an advanced form of economic associationism and therefore “cooperatives constitute the first major business agent of the social economy” (p. 27).

### **Contribution of cooperatives to the economy**

Cooperativism fulfils economic and social functions (García et al., 2024) as well as contributes to the socioeconomic well-being of its members (Sánchez et al., 2020). There are more than three million cooperatives worldwide, representing approximately 12% of the population, and they employ around 10% of the workforce (ICA, 2025; Acosta, 2022). In Mexico, more than eight million members are registered in 18,038 cooperatives. Nevertheless, participation is unequal, and only 7.39% of the population belongs to one (La Coperacha, 2021), highlighting the importance of the cooperative financial sector in the country, which comprises 154 cooperatives and 8.6 million members (World Council of Credit Unions, 2023).

### **Other cases of cooperatives**

Cano et al. (2012) highlight that organisational and technological capacity are key for fishing cooperatives in Balancán, Tabasco. By pointing to the San Pedro cooperative as the most prepared to innovate, they demonstrate that the combination of technification and organization enables fishers to address economic and environmental challenges through comprehensive projects. Domínguez-Aguirre et al. (2025) distinguish between survival and competitiveness in their study of fishing and tourism cooperatives in Jalisco, emphasizing that strengthening the internal structure and members' commitment are essential for consolidating and maintaining cooperatives. For their part, Peteán & Cappato (2011) studied artisanal fishers from cooperatives on the Paraná coast, who are vulnerable and low-income.

## **The challenges that cooperatives face in remaining competitive**

García et al. (2024) explain that the challenges faced by cooperatives to become competitive are related to a) interfunctional and interpersonal coordination since it implies coordination among their members, and b) administrative problems; c) market versus production orientation since cooperatives are more production-oriented than market-oriented; d) risk aversion and a lack of brand image, and e) misalignment between planning, organisation, and the scope of activity. In this regard, Sánchez et al. (2020) explain the main problems that restrict their competitive capacity: poor market prospects, only a short-term focus, poor market intelligence, a lack of knowledge and exploitation of their core skills, in addition to a lack of the ability to insert themselves into collaborative networks that allow them to create production chains and innovate. According to Lajara-Camilleri and Server-Izquierdo (2017), agri-food cooperatives can improve their competitiveness by applying key management principles.

## **Dynamic capabilities**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Porter (1980) shifted the focus of competitive advantage analysis to the internal aspects of the firm, focusing mainly on the exploitation of unique internal resources and capabilities (Penrose, 1959; Nelson & Winter, 1982; Wernerfelt, 1984; Hamel & Prahalad, 1990; Mahoney & Pandian, 1992; Peteraf, 1993). These studies conceptualise the company in terms of its resources, organisational competencies, and capabilities. Wernerfelt (1984) points out that resources can be identified as inputs into the company's operations, whether in manufacturing or personnel, and as intellectual capital reflected in employees' capabilities or competencies. The important thing is to recognise that, on their own, they do not generate value except through interaction with organisational capabilities, if they meet the following characteristics: they are difficult to imitate by competitors, valuable, rare, and difficult to replace (Barney, 1991). As for dynamic capabilities, they have their origin in Schumpeter's (1997) spirit of competition-based innovation. While Teece et al. (1997) are the pioneers in proposing this concept, they argue that dynamic capabilities allow the company to reconfigure its competencies, focusing on those capabilities, skills, competencies, routines or processes that organisations carry out to make internal changes, responding to the external environment, to adapt to the environment. This generates innovative sources of competitive advantage, increasing the company's value. On the other hand, Rueda et al. (2022) argue that their importance lies in their role as a tool to guide the company from its present state to its future. Several definitions of dynamic capabilities are found in the literature, some of which are presented in the following table.

**Table 1. Some authors and their key contributions to dynamic capabilities**

Authors	Dynamic capability definitions
Nelson (1991)	A group of commitments and methods to achieve the company's objective, in which there must be an innovative component that allows them to continue over time and be competitive.
Collins (1994)	The ability to develop and innovate faster.
Henderson & Cockburn (1994)	Architectural competencies become the models that guide the search for the origins of competitive advantage.
Schumpeter (1997)	Initiatives to propose and implement new combinations of means of production.
Helfat (1997)	The subset of competencies/capabilities that enable the organisation to create new products and processes and respond to changing market circumstances.
Teece et al. (1997)	The organisation's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to respond quickly to changing environments.
Eisenhardt & Martin (2000)	The organisational and strategic routines by which the organisation achieves new configurations of resources as the market emerges, grows, becomes saturated, and declines.
Helfat & Raubitschek (2000)	The ability of companies to innovate and adapt to changes in technologies and markets, including the ability to learn from mistakes.
Lee, Lee & Rho (2002)	A new source of competitive advantage lies in conceptualising how organisations can adapt to environmental changes.
Zahra & George (2002)	Change-oriented capabilities that help organisations re-employ and reconfigure their resource bases to meet customer demands and meet competitor strategies.
Zollo & Winter (2002)	A model that the company uses to generate processes effectively. It is structured and persistent.
Winter (2003)	Capacities that operate to extend, modify, or create ordinary capacities.
Vivas (2005)	Dynamic capabilities are complex, high-level organisational processes that provide the right conditions for modifying and renewing the organisation's assets.
Wang & Ahmed (2007)	The organisation's ability to develop new products and services, adopt new production methods, identify new markets and sources of supply, and establish new organisational forms.
Barreto (2010)	Potential of the firm to systematically solve problems based on its propensity to perceive opportunities and make timely, market-oriented decisions.
Cyfert & Krzakiewicz (2017)	A set of skills, competencies, and routines that provides firms: (a) the ability to analyse the market and the situation of the industry; (b) the ability to reconfigure resources; c) the ability to build relationships; and (d) the ability to respond
Burcharth (2024)	They enable companies to adapt, integrate, and reconfigure internal and external competencies, facilitating their ability to address rapidly changing environments and foster innovation.

Source: Authors' compilation from the literature

## **Classification of dynamic capabilities**

A model composed of four types of dynamic capabilities is proposed: absorption capability, innovation capability, learning capability, and adaptability (Garzón, 2015).

Absorptive capability is the ability of an organisation to recognise the value of new external information, assimilate it, and apply it; it is an internal mechanism that enables the organisation to expand its current knowledge through what it has acquired abroad. Absorptive capability is composed of four dimensions, which are: the acquisition of knowledge, i.e. the ability of organizations to identify and acquire knowledge finalized externally; the ability to assimilate knowledge based on characteristics of knowledge, organizational or alliance characteristics; the ability to transform knowledge speaks of the ability to develop and refine routines; and finally the exploitation of knowledge, which is the use of knowledge as a critical component. Innovation capability refers to the competence to create products or services, including the improvement of existing products or services within a company through the development of new production methods (Acevedo & Alborno, 2019). According to Garzón (2015), this capability is compared to the active search and exploitation of new and unique knowledge.

Learning capability refers to the ability to create, assimilate, disseminate, and apply knowledge, thereby equipping an organisation's agents to navigate changing environments (Acevedo & Alborno, 2019). It encompasses both individual and collective learning, resulting from social processes and interactions (Garzón, 2015). Acquisition involves identifying and transferring external knowledge (Garzón, 2018), generation focuses on developing and refining processes, and combination integrates internal and external knowledge to create new insights. The ability to adapt is crucial for organisations, allowing them to continuously develop and apply new knowledge sustainably (Acevedo & Alborno, 2019).

## **Other cases of dynamic capabilities**

González (2020), based on a census of 10,241 artisanal companies in the state of Jalisco, Mexico, identified 162 dedicated to ceramics, of which only fourteen have managed to internationalise. These cases demonstrate how the combination of tangible resources – family financing, adapted industrial machinery, self-made tools, and glazing techniques – in addition to intangible resources, enables the acquisition of learning skills, practical and traditional knowledge, an international reputation, cultural values, as well as relational networks that translate into sustainable competitive advantages. Meanwhile, Rao et al. (2024) explain that, in the Australian context, dynamic capabilities are entirely related to an organisation's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure competencies in response to opportunities and threats. The case demonstrates that strategic decisions can be influenced by leadership that encourages innovation, considers forming new alliances, and evaluates existing business models for changes.

## Research methodology

This is the second article prepared from the results of a research project designed to develop and implement a management model promoting business development in rural areas of the state of Jalisco, Mexico. In the first paper (Corvera et al., 2025), the model's structure was presented, along with some preliminary results. It explains how the quintuple helix, combined with rural innovation tools, can generate dynamic capabilities in organisations. To this end, a five-stage model was implemented: diagnosis, design, intervention, evaluation, and continuous improvement. In that article, the first two stages were detailed. Therefore, in this work, the third stage of the model is presented: intervention in organisations, focused on accompaniment and the generation of dynamic capabilities for business development. The model was implemented in seven aquaculture and fishing cooperatives across various municipalities in the state of Jalisco over approximately six years, at the request of the contracting institution and driven by scholars interested in monitoring the project's outcomes. Upon completing the collaboration, the work team continued to document and formalize what was done, and part of that is shown here. Of those cooperatives, the one that achieved the best results in terms of organisation, implementation, increased integration among members, and business line profitability was “Las Puertas de Calderón” S.C. de R.L., located in the town of Plan de Calderón, in the municipality of Zapotlanejo, Jalisco, Mexico. For this reason, the selection of this case to present in this paper, based on the criteria for choosing partners, was made by considering all the forty-two members, all of whom were males. They were given a “Service Nucleus” by the state authorities, consisting of infrastructure to provide a space for their primary activity and for complementary activities. This prompted the cooperative to enhance its skills in order to launch the venture. It was then that, from the University Centre for Economic-Administrative Sciences (CUCEA) of the University of Guadalajara (UdeG), a multidisciplinary group was formed to address this situation, designing a management model to promote business development in rural areas.

The intervention stage (training and accompaniment) was established with the formation of four work teams: the operational committee, in charge of the leadership of each of the five business lines; the operation of the business lines, responsible for the operation and efficiency of each of them; the steering committee, made up of the Board of Directors of the cooperative, in charge of the efficiency and operation of the cooperative and all the members of the cooperative. The authors worked with these four teams at various times, and in some cases, jointly, particularly in specific training courses.

The training and support were conducted to develop, as indicated by Garzón (2015), absorption capability, innovation capability, learning capability, and adaptability, focusing on two axes in the management model. The first involved organisational strengthening, implemented with the steering committee and the entire cooperative, addressing leadership, integration, organisational climate, strategic planning, decision-making, transparency, and accountability. The second focused on business efficiency, executed with teams from the different business lines, the operating committee, and, to some extent, the cooperative itself, targeting production improvement,

productive reconversion, cost calculation and pricing, work organisation, market adaptation, as well as customer search. Special attention was given to sustainability, which was incorporated into all stages and axes of the model, particularly in relation to the Official Mexican Standards (NOMS) and the green philosophy as organisational values within strategic planning.

During the intervention stage, observation logs, monthly reports, and income statements were prepared and presented at the cooperative's assemblies. With these documents, it has been possible to collect some impact measurements presented in the results section.

## Results

The implementation of the coursework workshop enabled the identification of key weaknesses in the cooperative, including a lack of resources, underutilised infrastructure, limited market knowledge, and low motivation. As a result, strategic objectives were established, focused on generating income through new business ventures, creating efficient work teams under NOMS, designing an appropriate offer for the local and regional markets, as well as strengthening members' organisational and cooperative capabilities.

To achieve this, a model of comprehensive training (covering cooperative law, strategic planning, costs, organisational climate, sustainability, and other areas) and practical support from committees and business lines (such as start-up, quality, financial control, accountability, and continuous improvement) was implemented, fostering dynamic capabilities for absorption, learning, innovation, and adaptation.

It is essential to note that establishing the core services required significant effort as the cooperative's operational expenses led to a deficit in its first year. Initially, there were only two lines of business: commercial fishing, more formally established but with many areas for improvement, and the restaurant, which incurred losses and maintained an extremely low entrepreneurial spirit among the members, with no organisational efficiency. Training began with micro manuals, comics, case studies, integration exercises, and others; this achieved visible impacts in the medium term: developing learning and absorption capability, mastering the management model for the cooperative, acquiring business values, fostering integration, raising the awareness of cooperative work, the formal organisational structuring of committees, defining roles, and strategic planning.

Regarding the quantitative measurement of the impact of the intervention, it was possible to design the operability of the five business lines (restaurant, commercial fishing, miscellaneous, sport fishing and ecotourism), train the five internal operation teams of the same, in addition to offering new products and services according to the market in miscellaneous, sport fishing and ecotourism with which it had not worked. Hence, there were no work teams or product and service offers. During the accompaniment, intervention techniques were implemented, such as role-play situations where optimal and erroneous cases were presented for the team members to evaluate; mirror training was also carried out (learning by copying and doing),

the implementation of logs of responsibilities and evaluation, financial and accountability formats, resulting in an outstanding improvement of financial indicators. The quantitative impact on the financial profits was notorious since not only did they not have income at the beginning of the intervention, but they were in deficit in the two lines of business they worked; with these profits they invested in a refrigerated van to distribute the product and thus eliminate the intermediary (who kept most of the profit). They expanded the restaurant area by 50 percent, thus they hired more personnel, reaching twenty jobs distributed across the five lines of business, which were covered by competitive salaries relative to the region and the benefits provided by law.

## Conclusion

The hypothesis raised during the implementation of this model can be accepted, especially from the intervention stage for business development. Dynamic capabilities can be generated that promote the efficiency of the organisation and contribute, in the medium and long term, to improving the conditions of the cooperative and the well-being of its members, potentially generating benefits for their environment as well. The obtained results show that the implementation of the management model aimed at business strengthening not only generated operational improvements but also produced dynamic capabilities (absorption, learning, innovation, and adaptation) that structurally transformed the competitiveness of the cooperative “Las Puertas de Calderón” S.C. de R.L. This model managed to influence the strategic reconfiguration of the business, expressed in the elimination of intermediaries, the incorporation of their own coordination infrastructure, the expansion of services, and the professionalisation of financial and operational management.

Domínguez-Aguirre et al. (2025) indicate that many rural cooperatives survive but are not competitive; to consolidate them, it is crucial to strengthen their internal structure and the commitment of their partners. Peteán & Cappato (2011) show that, on the Paraná coast, the formation of cooperatives among vulnerable populations – supported by laws, training, and networks – has reinforced biocultural conservation, a solidarity economy, and community participation. Meanwhile, Aranda et al. (2023) explain that significant weaknesses are evident in the fishing sector in terms of internal organisation and cooperative spirit. Comparing the cases cited by these authors with this case study, it is observed that at the beginning of the intervention and implementation of the model, the cooperative “Las Puertas de Calderón” was not competitive; it merely survived. It had critical areas for improvement, especially those related to internal structure, cooperative philosophy, teamwork, and decision-making, among others, therefore it can be concluded that the problems of cooperatives are similar both in Mexico and worldwide.

The replicability of the model to other cooperatives can be carried out since we were working with this model in six more cooperatives, all with results at different levels. The important thing that partly delimits the results is the profile of the cooperative, but this can be known and defined in the implementation of the tools of the first stage, which is the diagnosis. On the other hand, the results of this cooperative

have been continuously reviewed, and it can be said that they are continuing along a positive path regarding appropriation of the model in addition to organisational and cooperative efficiency. To guarantee continuity in the market and guarantee the future success and sustainability of the cooperative, it is necessary to work with the cooperative in generating learning to make financial investment decisions not only in the core services, but in financial institutions that can provide an opportunity for greater growth in addition to benefits for their members and their families. With the financial system and institutional networks, it is possible to expand the social and economic benefits. This would be a step towards the region's long-term competitiveness.

The results presented here are important information for decision-makers and government institutions since the implementation of collaborative work actions, such as the use of five-helix strategies (Carayannis et al., 2022), can be recommended, as is the case in this paper. Hence it is advisable to organise projects with communication and transversal responsibilities between the different institutions giving leadership to cooperatives and a decision-making capacity. It is also crucial to approach universities that have experts in the different areas of the project to be implemented, as this will allow effective and timely accompaniment to the projects and the groups with which they will work, guaranteeing a greater scope in the results of the project. Therefore, the university must assume an active role not only as a generator of knowledge but also as an agent of intervention and co-executor of local development by fostering collaboration within institutional networks and promoting the use of programs to advance local and regional development. Consequently, this study provides empirical evidence that cooperatives, under adequate conditions of strategic accompaniment, can evolve from subsistence structures into competitive organisations with verifiable economic and social impact, thereby contributing to the improvement of well-being in rural territories.

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## **GENEROWANIE DYNAMICZNYCH ZDOLNOŚCI ORGANIZACYJNYCH DLA ROZWOJU DZIAŁALNOŚCI GOSPODARCZEJ SPÓŁDZIELNI W JALISCO**

**Streszczenie:** Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie strategii mającej na celu generowanie dynamicznych zdolności, promowanie rozwoju biznesu w grupie spółdzielni zajmujących się usługami turystycznymi i rybackimi w stanie Jalisco. Należy zauważyć, że profile akademickie badanych członków tych spółdzielni były ograniczone, co znalazło odzwierciedlenie w braku umiejętności zarządzania organizacyjnego, braku pracy zespołowej oraz zauważalnym braku empatii i solidarności. W odpowiedzi na te potrzeby strategia skupiła się na szkoleniu i towarzyszeniu spółdzielniom w tych obszarach, ze szczególnym naciskiem na rozwijanie umiejętności organizacyjnych z wykorzystaniem dostępnych narzędzi, które wzmocniłyby ich dynamiczne zdolności. Proces towarzyszenia trwał średnio sześć lat i stawał czoła specyficznym wyzwaniom wynikającym ze specyfiki każdej spółdzielni. Wyniki wykazały znaczny postęp w zarządzaniu organizacją i rozwoju linii biznesowych, przyczyniając się do sukcesu biznesowego tych spółdzielni.

**Słowa kluczowe:** dynamiczne zdolności organizacyjne, rozwój biznesu, spółdzielnie

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