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Volume: 1 Issue: 3 2022	<b>Co-opetition in COVID-19 era among organizations</b>
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### Abstract

People and organizations should work together for the greater good. This article seeks to identify the categories of co-opetition in post-Corona organizations compared to before. For this purpose, it is used a qualitative approach. The saturation method was used to determine the number of participants and the independent coders' method was used to confirm the trustworthiness of the research. The results of this study have identified 4 categories in the field of co-opetition in organizations after COVID-19. These categories are more isolation because of lockdown, improving the relations between organizations and citizens, increasing co-opetition of organizations, and virtualization of most works.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Co-opetition, virtualization, isolation, Organizations

### 1-Introduction

The entire world is going through the Corona-Virus crisis, but something strangely good is happening. Organizations are uniting to figure clearly at an unprecedented scale, so it is cooperation, competition, and co-opetition (El-Chaarani et al., 2021; El-Chaarani and Raimi, 2021). As an existing species, there is no place within the world where existential threats do not find human beings, be it a cyclone, earthquake, or pandemic. People are inevitably within the same boat on the stormy seas. Economic and social life depends on the ability to arrange into

large groups and manage complex interpersonal relationships. Earning money and doing business makes people willing collaborators, while they are competing.

People understand that competition and co-opetition are fruits of an equivalent tree. Human beings must learn to co-operate while compete with other companies, whether in business or as individuals. Checking out today's modern organizations is unique due to it can also pursue internal and external co-opetition. An organization is always changing the grid of cooperators. It applies economic resources – money, human resources, and machines, among others to supply consumers with what they need in exchange for money. Co-opetition goes beyond an organization's internal environment, past the borders of the organization, and across the countries and continents. The function of how well a corporation competes is its prosperity. However, co-opetition should be cultivated instead of competing for narrow goods. As an organization and as people, this realization doesn't come naturally.

COVID-19 marks a new era for individuals, organizations, and communities. Competition and cooperation, which are the basic concepts of co-opetition, have undergone changes compared to before this period. This research seeks to identify people's experience of these concepts in organizations, society, and personal life. When it comes to experience, the qualitative research approach comes to mind that this research uses this approach. The main question that this study seeks to answer is what has happened to co-opetition in organizations since COVID-19.

## **2-Literature**

The concept of co-opetition was first coined by Ray Noorda, founding of Novell. It is popular in the strategic management field by Adam M. Brandenburger and Barry J. Nalebuff in their book *Co-opetition*. They used the concept to increase the usage of the theory of games in strategic management. They also supplied an analysis tool called the 'value net' (Brandenburger and Nalebuff, 1997).

In strategic research, this concept has become part of the quality and labeled vocabulary for situations where firms work and compete simultaneously. So far, cooperation in various industries including (Gnyawali et al. 2006), breweries (Bengtsson and Kock 2000), virtual spaces (Azizzadeh et al., 2013; Azizzadeh et al. 2016), and healthcare (Gee 2000) has been studied.

Microsoft is a famous technology company; it works on almost anything and everything about computer software, personal computers, consumer electronics, and related services. It has announced a public-private consortium with MIT, Princeton, Carnegie Mellon, and Universities of Illinois, California, and Chicago to supply scientists with funding and access to advanced supercomputers for solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic (Straus, 2020).

There is much other cooperation among organizations after this recent pandemic (Azizzadeh and Hosseini, 2021). A study has examined how organizations have used co-opetition to cope with the novel COVID-19 pandemic. According to its result, co-opetition can be an effective B2B-marketing strategy in a pandemic like COVID-19 (Crick and Crick, 2020).

A study identifies the factors for implementing co-opetition and prioritizes them in the Hong Kong manufacturing industry. Its results show that management leadership and development of trust are the most important success factors that facilitate the formulation of action plans for better co-opetition management. Three success factor categories are management commitment, relationship development, and communication management for co-opetition strategy management (Chin et al., 2008).

Development requires co-opetition, that is, the cooperation of organizations that compete concurrently. One research has linked organizational and societal outcomes of co-opetition (Manzhynski and Figgi, 2020). A qualitative case study of a co-opetitive relationship between a large multinational company and its suppliers showed how praxis on the micro-level influences, and is influenced by, practices on the meso and macro-levels (Tidstrom and Rajala, 2016).

Consideration, formalization, and participation positively affect cross-functional co-opetition. Leadership styles and organizational structures can be employed to enable a firm's management to favor cross-functional co-opetition between departments (Strese et al., 2016). The formal hierarchical structure, in the form of centralization, has a significant negative effect on knowledge sharing. Informal lateral relations have a significant positive effect on knowledge sharing among units that compete with each other for market share (Tsai, 2002).

### **3-Research Method**

The research method is based on a qualitative perspective. The researcher collects information from individuals or texts, extracts the meaning of the phrases and describes the concept (Khaki 2012). This research identifies people how to co-opetite in the post-corona era and compare it with before. The qualitative approach was selected to understand the deep understanding (Azizzadeh, 2019) of what is going on in organizations. Participants were selected from people who experienced organization life in the post-corona and before it. E-interviews were used to gather data for analysis and the responses are recorded. Non-probability (Akbari 2012) and purposeful or qualitative (Ranjbar et al. 2012) sampling methods were used to choose participants. The sampling method was available to individuals. The interviews were continued when the information saturated (Ranjbar et al. 2012) that it was enough with 30 participants. The interaction between the researcher and the respondent was used to determine the reliability (Faghihi and Alizadeh 2011) and for the trustworthiness of the research, independent coders and expert group (Abedi Jafari et al. 2011) were used.

From participants were asked about the following topic and were asked to explain their reasons:

What is the difference in co-opetition during the period after Corona, with the prior time?

Thematic Analysis was used to analyse the data (Abedi Jafari et al. 2011). In Thematic Analysis, researchers seek to understand layouts of meanings in the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). The steps of thematic analysis are as follows:

1. Text analysis and description
2. Describing and interpreting the text
3. Text composition and integration (Abedi Jafari et al. 2011)

Three stages of open coding include axial coding, and selective coding (Mehr Alizadeh et al. 2013, 267) was used to analyse gathered data.

Table1. Themes and codes

Row	Themes	Codes	Participants
1	More isolation because of Lockdown	Increased forced closures due to severe coronary conditions (2 codes)	Participant numbers 1 and 14
2	Improving the relations between organizations and citizens	Increase tax deadlines (3 codes)	Participant numbers 1, 2, and 3
		Increase deadlines for paying off customers' debts (2 codes)	Participant numbers 1 and 2

3	Increasing the cooperation of organizations	Collaboration, and Cooperation of various organizations to help organizations affected by Corona (14 codes)	Participant numbers 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28 and 29
		Supporting other nations to deal with the Corona problem (3 codes)	Participant numbers 7, 20, and 30
		Propagation that Corona can be defeated with cooperation (5 codes)	Participant numbers 8, 15, 19, 20, and 23
4	Virtualization of most works	Increase virtualization in organizations (9 codes)	Participant numbers 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 17, 18, 22, and 25

As can be seen in Table 1, most of the codes from the interviews are dedicated to the theme of increasing co-opetition of organizations. This theme has 22 codes. After that, the virtualization theme with 9 codes has been the most recognized concept through interviews. Improving the relations between organizations and citizens theme has been allocated 5 codes. Finally, the more isolation because of the lockdown theme has the least number of codes.

Figure1. C-opetition in organizations after COVID-19

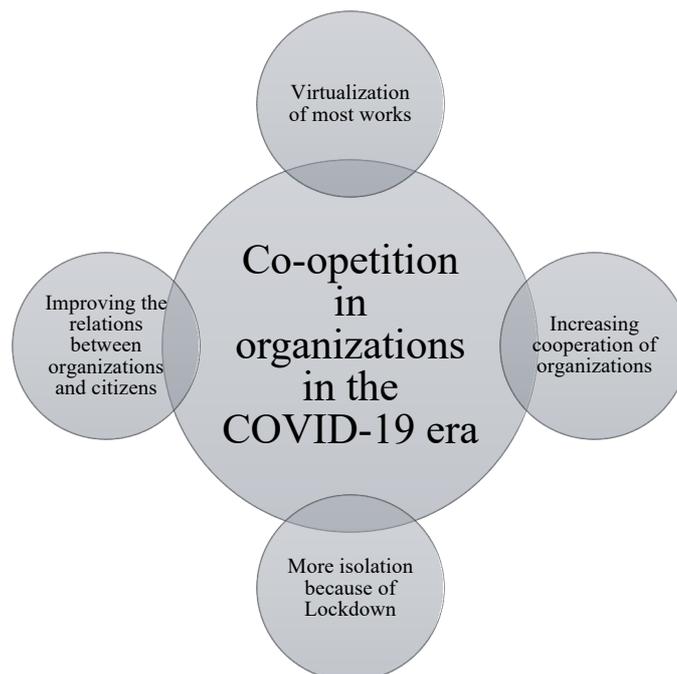


Figure 1 shows the final model extracted from the themes of this research. Four main themes for post-corona co-opetition have been identified in organizations. Indeed, with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, cooperation in organizations has undergone changes. They are “more isolation because of lockdown, improving the relations between organizations and citizens, increasing the cooperation of organizations, and virtualization of most works.”

#### **4-Concluison**

This study seeks to discover the co-opetition during the period after Corona, with the prior time. During a crisis, co-opetition can help organizations find new ways to solve immediate problems and build a positive reputation. It can significantly be a basis for future collaboration. Indeed, much of what is most precious within the world has emerged from co-opetition. Cooperatively, people run local economies, society, families, and trade ideas, goods, technologies, and services. This research has identified a framework for a deep understanding of co-opetition and cooperation in the organization during COVID-19 pandemic.

This paper does not provide a solution to improve co-opetition and cooperation in the organizations that further research can cover this gap. Although this study shows how people cooperate after a pandemic, it does not show the competition factor after COVID-19, and it is not without limitations. Due to the qualitative nature of this research, the focus has been on identifying concepts and themes and does not provide any statistics for the current situation. Future research can fill this gap. Another limitation is that the interviews were virtually not have the advantages of face-to-face interviews. Hence, for future studies, face-to-face interviews could be considered to support the present results.

If and as long as people use co-opetition, at a time when their mortal existence is threatened thanks to the relentless advance of the COVID-19 pandemic, people will prosper and flourish, and that we will create a happier world for ourselves.

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