

The Role of Social Innovations in Platform Coops and Perceived Member Value

The Rise of the Sharing Economy

% of online consumers willing to participate in sharing communities*



Mashable statista

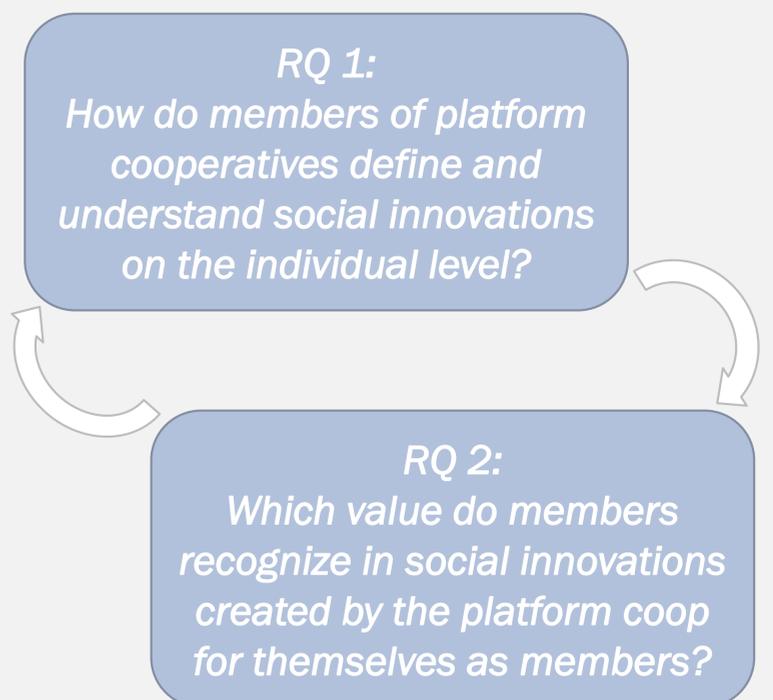
Source: Statista.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Cooperative businesses exist with the main goal of creating value for their members, by being set up on four principles: The principles of *support, identity, democracy and solidarity*. While it is argued in the literature that cooperative business models have the potential to foster social innovations, being defined as the implementation of new combinations, it has not yet been researched whether the value from social innovations directly benefits the members of cooperatives.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

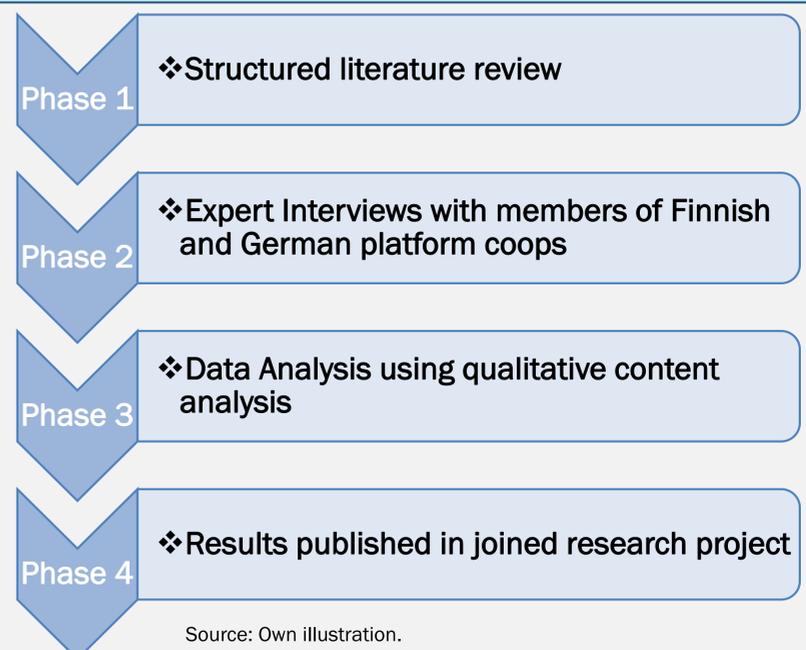
Platform coops exist in order to maximize member value rather than profit. Value creation in this context can happen on the level of the individual member as well as on the societal level. Platform coops can even be seen as social innovations in themselves. Although platform coops have gained in popularity and grown by number within the past years, it has not yet been researched what the value from social innovations means from the perspective of coop members, and whether it increases the member value. The main research objective is to understand the role of social innovations created by platform coops as perceived by the members of cooperatives.



Source: Own illustration.

RESEARCH APPROACH

In order to answer the above research questions, conceptual work is combined with empirical research. The literature review is building on Platform Economics Theory and Diffusion of Innovation Theory. Explorative in-depth expert interviews are conducted with digital platform coops in Germany and Finland. The data is analyzed and results are published in a research paper.



Source: Own illustration.



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