Farmer cooperatives and access to agricultural extension services: Evidence from cassava farmers in Nigeria

Discussant: Nangobi Racheal, Egerton University
SUMMARY

Background

• Farmer cooperatives improve access to extension services and contribute to sustainable agricultural development.
  – Through improving agricultural productivity and income.

Problem

• Available literature focused on the impact of cooperative membership on welfare, farm innovations and market access and the effect of extension services on welfare and input use.
SUMMARY

• However, limited empirical evidence on the linkage between farmer cooperative membership and access to agricultural extension services.

Aim

• To analyze the impact of farmer cooperative membership on access to extension services.
• To investigate factors influencing cooperative members' and non-members’ access to extension services in Oyo State, Nigeria

Methodology- the Inverse probability Weighted Regression Adjustment (IPWRA) estimator to account for selection bias
SUMMARY

Findings

• Membership significantly increases farmers’ access to extension services.
• Access to extension- higher access among members.
• Primary and secondary education among members and non-members
• Tertiary education, large farm sizes, off-farm activities, electricity, television, and access to credit.

Contribution

• Contributes to sustainable agricultural development through improving farmers access to agricultural extension services.
Comments

In the abstract;

• Tell the research design used.
• Be specific in the problem statement; not “limited information on the linkage between membership and access to extension”.
• Improve on the problem to factor factors influencing access among members and non-members.
  ✓ Indicate the results for factors influencing access to extension services among members and non-members.
• Check on the grammar (we find, we apply).
• In the introduction;

• Organize your paragraphs in a uniform way;
  
  ➢ Indents; line 24 vs line 33, 50
  
  ➢ et al/ et al (line 44, 55).
  
  ➢ Edit your citations all through the document; the *et al.* especially at the end of sentences (*et al.*, ... not *et al.* ...).

• Check on “Ooperative” (line 47)

• Improve the aim of your study in line 73. capture factors that influence extension access for members and non members.
• Which theory is your study based on? You may need to include the theoretical framework section just after the introduction section.

In the empirical estimation strategy section;

• The model, as explained in lines 119-124, extension access has many explanatory variables. So, you may need to reformulate the aim in that it reflects all.

• Explain the explanatory variables (education level, ownership of television,...etc); how you measured each of them.

• **Access to extension**; dummy. Why not in terms of number of times of contact with extension services.
In the Survey data section;

- Check on the sentence that starts from line 177 to 178, something missing to link it to the previous sentence.
- Indicate the software used for data entry and analysis

In the descriptive statistics;

- Re-arrange your finding in line 186-188. “members and non-members have similar primary and secondary levels of education, and non-farm income, but they have significant mean differences across other variables”.
- The reverse of that sentence would be better.
  - First tell significantly different variables, then the non-significant.
• For variables significantly different; first present the finding, interpret, discuss, support literature.

In the empirical results;

• Factors influencing farmers’ decisions to join farmer cooperatives in line 222 are already widely researched.

➢ You may not need that section.

✓ Concentrate on impact cooperative membership on extension access and,

✓ Factors that influence access to extension between members and non-members
For all the results (descriptive and empirical);

- First present the finding (level of significance and the coefficient with its direction/sign),
- Interpret it (what it means),
- Discuss (what could be the reason for that),
- Provide support literature (supporting/contrary).

✓ In case of a disagreement, explain the possible reasons for the disagreement.
• New findings should be presented in new paragraphs.
• Check line 227 and 232, present each finding in its own paragraph and exhaust it.
• Line 232 presents findings for three variables at once.
  ✓ Handle one variable at a time, since they have different effect (Coef and P-value).
  ✓ Each of these findings should have different discussions and may be signaling different issues.
  ✓ Ownership of television- information access.
  ✓ Motorbike- transportation variable/ transportation ease.
  ✓ Electricity is not an assets. It is a utility and institutional.
For the Impact of cooperative membership on access to extension;

• Present, interpret, discuss, support literature for:
  ➢ Average treatment effect of membership on access to extension.
  ➢ Significant factors influencing access to extension for members
  ➢ Significant factors influencing access to extension for non-members- **access to credit was forgotten.**

• Explain each finding in its own paragraph with different support literature.
• Variable education level; was split into three different variables: primary level, secondary level and tertiary level.

• Another education variable- Formal education/ no formal education

  ➢ How about having one education variable measured in terms of years spent in school

• Location specific dummies; captured in terms of names of villages.

  ➢ How about looking at it in terms of; distance to cooperative/ extension agents, road type used and or time taken to reach the extension agents
In the conclusion section,

• Factors that influence access to extension among members and non-members was not captured.

• Avoid presenting results again.

For example;

“cooperative membership increased the likelihood of accessing extension services among 294 cassava farmers in Nigeria by 33%”.

- Have concluding remarks for the impact of cooperative membership and the factors influencing access to extension for members and non-members followed by the recommendations.
In the conceptual framework

• Asset endowment may not need to stand alone.
  ➢ It is part of socioeconomic factors; may not need to stand alone.

Relevance to literature;

• The paper can provide good insights into:
  ➢ Impact of cooperative membership on access to extension.
  ➢ Factors that influence access to extension for members and non-members.

✓ This will guide governments and development partners.