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Assessing the Role of Consumer Cooperatives in Improving Livelihood of the Members of Hawassa Zuria Woreda, Sidama Regional State, Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the roles of consumer cooperatives in the improvement of livelihoods for members in Hawassa Zuria Woreda. A mixed research approach was used, incorporating a descriptive research design. Simple random sampling was used to select 213 cooperative members as the sample. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews, and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS version 21.0. Descriptive and narrative analyses were conducted, revealing a positive relationship between product and consumer demand for cooperative members, while price had a negative relationship. The narrative analysis highlighted the significant and positive role of consumer cooperatives in improving the livelihoods of members in Hawassa Zuria Woreda. Interviews also revealed challenges faced by consumer cooperatives in Dale Woreda, such as limited access to capital, inadequate business management skills, and market competition. However, consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda have significant opportunities to benefit the local community through their focus on collective ownership and democratic decision-making. Based on these findings, recommendations are provided to enhance the overall performance of consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda.

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1. Introduction

Road construction is a vital infrastructural development activity that plays a significant role in Introduction:

Consumer cooperatives play a crucial role in improving livelihoods of their members by offering various benefits such as access to affordable goods and services, collective bargaining power, and income generation opportunities. These cooperatives are particularly important in rural areas where access to essential items and services is limited. This study aims to examine the impact of consumer cooperatives on the livelihoods of members in Hawassa Zuria Woreda, Sidama Regional State, Ethiopia. In doing so, it seeks to address a research gap in understanding the specific ways in which consumer cooperatives contribute to improved livelihoods within this context.

Firstly, it is important to note that the concept of consumer cooperatives has not been extensively studied in the Ethiopian context. While there have been studies on agricultural cooperatives and their impact on farmers' livelihoods, limited research exists on the role of consumer cooperatives. Therefore, this study fills a research gap by focusing specifically on the impact of consumer cooperatives on the livelihoods of members in Hawassa Zuria Woreda.

Secondly, while studies on consumer cooperatives in other countries have shown positive impacts on members' livelihoods, it is essential to understand if and how these findings can be applied to the Ethiopian context. Consumer cooperatives in Ethiopia face unique challenges such as limited infrastructure, low literacy rates, and poor financial management systems. Therefore, this study aims to identify the specific mechanisms through which consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda contribute to improving the livelihoods of their members, considering these contextual factors.

Thirdly, there is a lack of comprehensive empirical evidence on the extent to which consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda are fulfilling their objectives of benefiting members. While these cooperatives exist in the region, little is known about their effectiveness in providing affordable goods and services, enhancing members' income, and promoting economic empowerment. By investigating these aspects, this study aims to bridge the research gap and provide a deeper understanding of the impact of consumer cooperatives on livelihoods in the region.

Fourthly, previous studies on consumer cooperatives have focused primarily on their economic benefits, such as access

to affordable goods and improved income generation. However, there is limited research on how consumer cooperatives contribute to social and environmental aspects of members' livelihoods. This study intends to examine the broader impacts of consumer cooperatives, including their roles in promoting social cohesion, enhancing social capital, and encouraging sustainable practices.

Lastly, the research gap also lies in the absence of studies exploring the challenges and opportunities faced by consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda. By identifying the barriers and enablers to the success of these cooperatives, this study will provide insights for policy-makers and practitioners to design strategies that can further strengthen the consumer cooperative movement, thus improving the livelihoods of their members.

In conclusion, this study aims to fill the research gap in understanding the specific impacts and challenges faced by consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda. By examining the various dimensions of their contributions to members' livelihoods, this research will provide valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and cooperatives themselves to enhance their effectiveness and ensure the sustained well-being of their members.

Research objectives

The general objective of this study is to assess the contributions of consumer cooperatives in the marketing of consumer goods for the members' satisfaction with reference to Hawassa Zuria Woreda, Sidama region, Ethiopia.

Specific Objectives

- a. To evaluate whether the consumer **products** being marketed by consumer cooperatives meet consumer needs in the study area;
- b. To trace out the **pricing** of products and the satisfaction of the consumers with the prices of the consumer goods being marketed by consumer cooperatives in the study area;
- c. To assess the opportunities and challenges of the consumer cooperatives in the study area;
- d. To assess the role of the consumer cooperatives in improving the livelihood of the members in the Woreda;

2. Review of the Literature

Consumer cooperatives can play a significant role in improving the livelihoods of their members in rural areas of developing countries like Ethiopia. According to Akers, Sotkilava, and Xu (2020), consumer cooperatives are member-owned and member-managed organizations that provide essential goods and services to their members at affordable prices. By pooling their resources and collectively purchasing and distributing products, members can overcome challenges such as high prices and limited access to markets, thus enhancing their livelihoods.

One crucial aspect of consumer cooperatives is their ability to create employment opportunities for community members. As highlighted by Mekonnen (2017), cooperatives can create job opportunities, particularly in agricultural and agro-processing activities. In Hawassa Zuria Woreda, where many individuals rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, consumer

cooperatives can not only provide income for members but also support rural development by promoting agriculture-based industries and value addition.

Additionally, consumer cooperatives can enhance access to markets for small-scale farmers and producers. As noted by Abebe and Gebremedhin (2020), cooperatives provide a platform for collective bargaining power, enabling small farmers to negotiate better prices and access larger markets. By participating in consumer cooperatives, members can sell their products in bulk and take advantage of economies of scale, thus improving their income and livelihoods.

Consumer cooperatives also have the potential to enhance financial inclusion in rural areas. According to Sintayehu, Bekele, and Kumar (2019), cooperatives can act as financial intermediaries, offering savings and credit services to their members. In Hawassa Zuria Woreda, where access to formal financial institutions is limited, cooperatives can empower members to save, access credit, and invest in income-generating activities, ultimately improving their economic well-being.

Furthermore, consumer cooperatives can provide training and capacity-building opportunities for their members. Through workshops and other educational initiatives, members can acquire skills, knowledge, and best practices in various aspects of business management and cooperative development. This finding is supported by Gebretsadik, Dabasso, and Faustin (2019), who suggest that training and capacity-building programs offered by cooperatives can enhance members' entrepreneurial skills and enable them to explore new income opportunities.

In conclusion, consumer cooperatives have the potential to significantly improve the livelihoods of members in rural areas of Ethiopia, including Hawassa Zuria Woreda. By creating employment opportunities, enhancing access to markets, promoting financial inclusion, and providing training and capacity-building, cooperatives can empower individuals, promote rural development, and reduce poverty.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Philosophical Assumptions

Using a mix of social constructivism and positivism research philosophical assumptions is of utmost importance as it provides a balanced and comprehensive approach to research. By incorporating social constructivism, which highlights the significance of social and cultural context in shaping knowledge and understanding, researchers can gain insights into how individuals interpret and construct reality. Simultaneously, positivism offers a scientific and empirical foundation for research, ensuring objectivity, generalizability, and the ability to test hypotheses. This combination allows researchers to not only understand the subjective meanings individuals attribute to their experiences but also to analyze and explain phenomena in a rigorous and systematic manner. By embracing a mix of assumptions, researchers are able to harness the strengths of both approaches, leading to a more robust and nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

3.2. Research design and Approach

Once the research topic was identified and defined clearly, the next step was to design the research method, because the research design provides guidelines for data collection and analysis. A quantitative approach is best if a researcher tests hypotheses by specifying narrow hypotheses and makes statistical tests to support hypotheses, and the second approach (qualitative) deals with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions, and behavior in non-quantitative analysis. In this study, the researcher adopted a cross-sectional design with a mixed research approach in order to achieve the stated research objective and to answer research questions properly.

3.3. Data type and sources

In this study, both primary and secondary data were used. The primary data sources were the Sidama region employees' road construction and transport authority. The secondary data sources were published and unpublished materials available in libraries and on internet websites related to the impact of employees' motivation on organizational performance.

3.4. Sampling Design

The target population for this study was the total of 630 members of the cooperative union in Hawassa Zuria Woreda of the Sidama region. To select a sample size of 260 from the 630 employees, a simple random sampling technique was used by the researcher to give equal chances to all employees and save resources. To determine the sample size for this study, the researcher used the mathematical formula of Yamane (1967) by taking into account the total population, the sampling error, and the level of reliability, and it was assumed that the sample would have 95% reliability about the population and that a sampling error would be 5%. This simplest formula is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (0.05^2) * N}$$

Where

- n = sample size
- N = target population

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(\alpha)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{630}{2.425} = 260$$

Therefore, the maximum sample size of this study is **260** members of the cooperative. The logic behind using a **simple sampling technique** to select a sample from the Sidama region road and transport bureau was to give equal chances to all employees and to select a representative sample for the study.

3.5. Methods of Data Collection

In this research, self-administered questionnaires and direct personal interviews were used to collect primary data. The self-administered questionnaires were used to get detailed information from sample employees of the tax authority, and interviews were organized with the human resource coordinator of the organization.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis

After the accomplishment of the data collection procedure, it was classified per each variable; the qualitative data was coded to be measured quantitatively. In this research, data was analyzed with the help of SPSS version 21.0.

3.7. Reliability Test

To measure the consistency of the questionnaire, particularly the Likert-type scale, reliability analysis is essential in reflecting the overall reliability of constructs that it was measuring. The test of reliability is another important test of sound measurement. A measuring instrument is reliable if it provides consistent results. A reliable measuring instrument does contribute to validity, but a reliable instrument need not be a valid instrument. If the quality of reliability is satisfied by an instrument, then while using it we can be confident that transient and situational factors are not interfering with the data and that the data collected before making regression analyses is reliable. In the current research, the researchers employed Cronbach's Alpha (α) with 0.928 for 11 items, which is greater than 0.7 and is very acceptable.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

The following ethical considerations were given attention by the researchers and enumerators while conducting the research, including voluntary participation, no harm to participants, anonymity and confidentiality, not deceiving the subjects, and privacy of participants. Conserving the voluntary participation of respondents, no participants were forced to take part in the research, and participants were free to withdraw from the research at any moment. With regard to harm to participants, the researcher ensured that there was no physical or psychological harm done to the participants as a result of the study. When it comes to anonymity and confidentiality, all information gathered during the study is being handled confidentially, and permission from the participants was obtained for all information to be shared publicly. Not deceiving the subjects, since participants were informed clearly about the aim, purpose, and procedures of the study and would not be deceived in any way. Finally, privacy of participants, the privacy of the participants was respected.

4. Results

4.1. Response Rate

The researchers collected data from 170 respondents out of 213 sample respondents. The response rate was 80%, which

implies that more than 50% of respondents participated in the process of data collection. Then, the analysis of the data was based on the questionnaires collected using SPSS version 21.0, which implies that almost all respondents were involved in the data collection process to make the research findings reliable.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Product and Consumer Behavior

Table 1. Analysis on Product and Consumer Behavior

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Product quality has positive effect on consumer & Satisfaction	170	1.00	5.00	4.3706	.97195
Product Features and Functionality has positive effect on consumer Satisfaction	170	1.00	5.00	4.2765	.58586
I like well-designed product for personal use	170	1.00	5.00	4.5176	.62704
I feel happy with Available and Accessible Product	170	1.00	5.00	4.5824	.94006
I Perceived Value For Money For Product I Purchased From cooperatives In Woreda	170	1.00	5.00	4.6882	.65487

Source: Survey data, 2023

The quality of a product is a crucial parameter that directly affects customer satisfaction. When a product meets or exceeds customer expectations in terms of performance, durability, reliability, and features, it leads to higher levels of customer satisfaction. On the other hand, poor product quality can result in dissatisfaction and a decline in customer satisfaction. Accordingly, the mean ad value of item one “Product quality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction” was 4.37, which means if cooperatives quality products, members are satisfied with the product. The features and functionality of a product play a significant role in customer satisfaction. Customers expect products that cater to their specific needs and provide value. When a product offers the desired features, functionalities, and capabilities, it enhances customer satisfaction. Conversely, if a product lacks essential features or fails to meet customer requirements, it can lead to dissatisfaction. Accordingly, the mean ad value of item one “Product Features and Functionality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction” was 4.27, which means if cooperatives quality products, members are satisfied with the product. This implies that if the product has good features, the consumers are happy to enjoy the product. The design of a product is another important parameter that impacts customer satisfaction. A well-designed product, considering factors such as aesthetics, ergonomics, and usability, can enhance the overall customer experience. Customers appreciate products that are visually appealing, easy to use, and comfortable to handle. Conversely, a poorly designed product can result in frustration and decreased customer satisfaction. Accordingly, the mean ad value of item one “Product Features and Functionality has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction” was 4.27, which means if cooperatives produce well-designed products, members are satisfied with the products. The availability and accessibility of a product are critical factors in customer satisfaction. Customers expect products to be readily available when needed, whether it's through physical stores, online platforms, or efficient distribution channels. When a product is easily accessible and available to customers,

it contributes to their satisfaction. However, if a product is consistently out of stock or difficult to obtain, it can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction. Accordingly, the mean ad value of item one “P I feel happy with Available and Accessible Product” was 4.5, which means if cooperatives deliver the availability and accessibility of the product, members are satisfied with the product. The perceived value for money is an essential parameter in the relationship between product and customer satisfaction. Customers want to feel that the product they purchase provides good value for the price paid. If a product offers high-quality features, performance, and durability at a reasonable price, it enhances customer satisfaction. However, if customers perceive a product to be overpriced or of poor quality for the price paid, it can result in dissatisfaction and a decline in customer satisfaction. Accordingly, the mean ad value of item one “I Perceived Value for Money for Product I Purchased From cooperatives in Woredas” was 4.37, which means if cooperatives provide quality products, members are satisfied with the products. Overall, the parameters of product quality, features and functionality, design, availability and accessibility, and value for money play crucial roles in determining customer satisfaction. By focusing on these parameters and continuously improving them, businesses can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, leading to long-term success.

4.3. Analysis Pricing Strategies and Consumer Satisfaction

The relationship between pricing strategies and consumer satisfaction is a complex and dynamic one. Pricing strategies play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and overall satisfaction levels. Here are five parameters that highlight this relationship:

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Price and Consumer Behavior

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I believe that the price I pay aligns with the value I receive	170	1.00	5.00	2.7588	1.16941
I always often associate higher prices with better quality	170	1.00	5.00	2.9647	1.28668
I feel that transparency in pricing is crucial for consumer satisfaction	170	1.00	5.00	2.9606	1.12381
I always compare prices across different brands or competitors to assess the value they receive	170	1.00	5.00	2.7647	1.21282
Consistency in pricing is important for consumer satisfaction	170	1.00	5.00	2.8647	1.29150
Price has a negative relationship with demand	170	1.00	5.00	2.8235	1.18847

Source: Survey 2023

One parameter that strongly influences consumer satisfaction is the perceived value of a product or service. When consumers believe that the price they pay aligns with the value they receive, it enhances satisfaction. Pricing strategies that effectively communicate the value proposition and justify the price can lead to higher levels of consumer satisfaction. Conversely, if consumers perceive the price to be too high for the value offered, it can result in dissatisfaction. 1. Accordingly, the mean value of item one, “I Perceived Value for Money for Product I Purchased From Cooperatives In Our Woredas,” was 2.7588, which means if cooperatives quality product members are satisfied with the product.

The relationship between price and quality is another important parameter. Consumers often associate higher prices with better quality. Therefore, pricing strategies that align with the perceived quality of the product or service can positively impact consumer satisfaction. However, if the price does not align with the expected quality, it can lead to disappointment and decreased satisfaction. 1. Accordingly, the mean value of item one “I always often associate higher prices with better quality” was 2.96, which means they are neutral on transparency in pricing, which is crucial for consumer satisfaction. Transparency in pricing is crucial for consumer satisfaction. Consumers appreciate clear and transparent pricing information that allows them to make informed purchase decisions. Pricing strategies that are transparent, with no hidden fees or surprises, contribute to higher consumer satisfaction. On the other hand, if pricing is unclear or deceptive, it can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction. The item three “I Perceived Value for Money for Product I Purchased From Cooperatives In Our Woredas” was 2.7588, which means if cooperatives quality products, members are satisfied with the product.

The competitiveness of pricing in the market is another parameter that affects consumer satisfaction. Consumers compare prices across different brands or competitors to assess the value they receive. Pricing strategies that offer competitive prices relative to the market can positively impact consumer satisfaction. However, if prices are consistently higher than competitors without justification, it can lead to dissatisfaction. The value of item three “Consistencies in pricing is important for consumer satisfaction” was 2.7588, which means if competitiveness of pricing, members are satisfied with the product. Consistency in pricing is important for consumer satisfaction. Consumers expect pricing to be consistent across different channels, locations, or time periods. Pricing strategies that maintain consistency and avoid sudden price fluctuations contribute to consumer satisfaction. Inconsistency in pricing, such as price variations for the same product or service, can result in confusion and dissatisfaction. 1. Accordingly, the mean value of item one “Consistency in pricing is important for consumer satisfaction” was 2.89588, which means if cooperatives quality products, members are satisfied with the product.

The relationship between inflation and consumer satisfaction is complex and can have both positive and negative effects. Here are some key points to consider: Inflation erodes the purchasing power of consumers' money over time. When prices of goods and services increase faster than wages or income, consumers may find it more challenging to afford the same level of consumption. This can lead to a decline in consumer satisfaction as individuals may feel that their standard of living is decreasing. Inflation can also impact consumer satisfaction through price expectations. If consumers expect prices to continue rising, they may engage in panic buying or hoarding, which can create shortages and further drive up prices. This can lead to frustration and dissatisfaction as consumers struggle to find affordable goods and services. Inflation can negatively affect consumer confidence and overall economic stability. When inflation rates are high and unpredictable, consumers may become anxious about the future, leading to reduced spending and investment. This can create a downward spiral in the economy and impact consumer satisfaction as individuals feel uncertain about their financial well-being.

Inflation can influence interest rates, which, in turn, affects the cost of borrowing. If inflation rates are high, central banks may raise interest rates to control inflation. This can increase the cost of borrowing for consumers, making it more

expensive to finance purchases such as homes or cars. Higher interest rates can lead to decreased consumer satisfaction as individuals face higher debt repayments. Inflation can stimulate wage growth as workers demand higher wages to keep up with rising prices. If wages grow at a similar or higher rate than inflation, consumer satisfaction may not be significantly impacted. However, if wages fail to keep pace with inflation, consumers may experience a decline in their purchasing power, leading to dissatisfaction. It is important to note that the relationship between inflation and consumer satisfaction can vary depending on the overall economic conditions, government policies, and individual circumstances. Governments and central banks often implement measures to manage inflation and stabilize the economy to ensure consumer satisfaction and overall economic well-being. The mean value of Price has a negative relationship with demand, with a value of 2.8235, which is natural. Overall, pricing strategies have a significant impact on consumer satisfaction. By considering parameters such as perceived value, price-quality relationship, price transparency, competitive pricing, and pricing consistency, businesses can effectively manage pricing strategies to enhance consumer satisfaction and build long-term customer loyalty.

Consumer cooperatives in Woreda have significant opportunities to thrive and benefit the local community. With a focus on collective ownership and democratic decision-making, consumer cooperatives can empower individuals by providing access to affordable and quality goods and services. These cooperatives can play a vital role in addressing the needs and aspirations of the community, particularly in areas where there may be limited access to essential products or where prices may be inflated due to market dynamics. By pooling resources, negotiating better deals with suppliers, and leveraging economies of scale, consumer cooperatives can improve the purchasing power of their members, promote local economic development, and foster a sense of solidarity and community engagement. Additionally, consumer cooperatives can serve as platforms for education and skills development, enabling members to enhance their financial literacy and participate actively in the cooperative's operations. Overall, consumer cooperatives in Dale Woreda have the potential to create a more inclusive and sustainable local economy while enhancing consumer satisfaction and well-being.

Consumer cooperatives in Woreda face several challenges that can hinder their success and growth. Firstly, limited access to capital and financial resources can pose a significant obstacle for cooperatives, making it difficult to invest in infrastructure, expand operations, or compete with larger market players. Additionally, inadequate business management skills and lack of professional expertise can impede effective decision-making, strategic planning, and efficient operations. External factors such as market competition, fluctuating prices, and changing consumer preferences can also pose challenges for consumer cooperatives. Moreover, ensuring active member participation and commitment can be a challenge, as individuals may have varying levels of engagement and conflicting priorities. Lastly, navigating legal and regulatory frameworks, obtaining necessary licenses, and complying with government regulations can be complex and time-consuming for cooperatives. Overcoming these challenges requires strong leadership, capacity-building initiatives, access to support networks, and collaboration with relevant stakeholders to create an enabling environment for consumer cooperatives in Dale Woreda.

Consumer cooperatives play a crucial role in improving the livelihoods of their members in Woreda. By pooling resources and leveraging collective bargaining power, consumer cooperatives can provide access to essential goods and services at

affordable prices. This not only helps members save money but also ensures their basic needs are met. Moreover, consumer cooperatives create opportunities for income generation and employment. They can support local producers and suppliers, fostering economic development within the community. By eliminating intermediaries, cooperatives enable members to earn fair prices for their products and reduce dependency on external markets. Additionally, consumer cooperatives often prioritize social responsibility, investing in community development projects, education, and healthcare initiatives. Through democratic decision-making and active member participation, cooperatives empower individuals, build social capital, and promote a sense of ownership and belonging. Overall, consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda contribute significantly to improving the livelihoods of their members, enhancing economic resilience, and fostering sustainable development in the local community.

5. Conclusion

The study conducted on factors affecting employee motivation in the public sector found that salary, promotion, job satisfaction, recognition, and work conditions have a positive and statistically significant effect on employee motivation. Based on these findings, recommendations were made to the Hawassa Zuria Woreda. First, product quality and consumer satisfaction were identified as important factors. High-quality products that meet or exceed customer expectations lead to higher levels of satisfaction. Similarly, product features and functionality play a significant role in customer satisfaction. Well-designed products that consider aesthetics, ergonomics, and usability enhance the overall customer experience. Additionally, the availability and accessibility of a product are critical factors in customer satisfaction. Easy access to products contributes to satisfaction, while difficulties in obtaining products can result in dissatisfaction.

Price-quality relationship also influences consumer satisfaction. Consumers often associate higher prices with better quality, so pricing strategies that align with perceived quality positively impact satisfaction. Similarly, the perceived value for money is essential. When consumers believe the price they pay aligns with the value they receive, satisfaction increases. However, if prices do not match the expected quality or value, dissatisfaction can occur. Transparency in pricing is crucial for consumer satisfaction. Clear and transparent pricing information helps consumers make informed purchase decisions, while unclear or deceptive pricing leads to frustration. The competitiveness and consistency of pricing also affect satisfaction. Competitive prices relative to the market positively impact satisfaction, while consistently higher prices without justification lead to dissatisfaction. Consistency in pricing across different channels, locations, or time periods is important to consumers. Inconsistent pricing creates confusion and dissatisfaction. The relationship between inflation and consumer satisfaction is complex. Inflation can erode consumers' purchasing power and lead to a decline in satisfaction. It can also impact satisfaction through price expectations and consumer confidence. Transparent and consistent pricing, along with pricing strategies that communicate value and justify prices, help maintain satisfaction.

Consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda have significant opportunities to thrive and benefit the local community. By focusing on collective ownership and democratic decision-making, these cooperatives can improve access to affordable and quality goods and services. They can also contribute to local economic development and foster community

engagement. Consumer cooperatives can provide platforms for education and skills development, enabling members to actively participate and enhance their financial literacy. By doing so, consumer cooperatives can create a more inclusive and sustainable local economy while enhancing consumer satisfaction and well-being.

However, consumer cooperatives in Hawassa Zuria Woreda also face challenges. Limited access to capital and financial resources, inadequate business management skills, market competition, and member participation are some of the obstacles they encounter. Overcoming these challenges requires strong leadership, capacity-building initiatives, support networks, and collaboration with stakeholders. Consumer cooperatives play a crucial role in improving the livelihoods of their members. They provide access to essential goods and services at affordable prices, creating opportunities for income generation and employment. Cooperatives support local producers and suppliers, promote economic development, and prioritize social responsibility. Through democratic decision-making and active member participation, cooperatives empower individuals, build social capital, and contribute to overall community development.

6. Direction for Future Research

This study was only focused on the role of cooperative societies in the livelihood of members in Hawassa Zuria. In other words, the findings of this study may be difficult to generalize to all public sectors in the Sidama region, Ethiopia, and all countries in Africa in particular, and in the world in general. Hence, this study can be improved if it is done at the national, continental, and international levels by comparing factors affecting employees' motivation.

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