

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

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

COMMENTS

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

Introduction:

Fostering local research initiatives to bolster cooperative economies and national ownership is critical. Consumer cooperatives play a vital role in socioeconomic development, yet studies examining their impact, particularly in Ethiopia, are scarce. The scarcity of studies on consumer cooperatives, especially within the Ethiopian context, underscores the relevance of this research. Promoting engagement among Ethiopian scholars in exploring the cooperative economy is pivotal for its advancement. However, before publication, this research paper requires refinement and elucidation to ensure clarity and comprehension among readers.

Key Points for Improvement:

Introduction of the Cooperative: To comprehend the challenges and dynamics facing this consumer cooperative, readers require contextual information. This should include:

- Localization: Clarification that Hawassa Zuria is a woreda in the Sidama Region, Ethiopia, situated in the Great Rift Valley.
- Historical Background: Insight into the formation, context, successes, and failures of the cooperative.
- Membership and Scale: Details on the cooperative's size, membership demographics (urban or rural), and its operational scale, whether local, regional, or union level.
- Goods and Services Offered: Description of the products and services provided, including the range and quantity.

Methodology:

Sample Clarity:

The paper lacks clarity regarding the sample under study. Clarification is needed on whether the 213 cooperative members mentioned in the abstract and on page 5, where the paper indicates: " of 260 individuals from the 630

employees referenced later constitute the sample”, are employees of the union or cooperative members from local cooperatives. By principle, the members of a cooperative union are the grassroots level cooperatives. On the contrary, an employee is a person hired by a company to perform a service, receiving salary or wages. Cooperative members, according to the ICA (International Cooperative Alliance), are « persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations, through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise ».

Information: Provide details on the questionnaire used, including its content and administration methods, such as whether it was administered during focus groups or individual meetings.

Conceptual Precision:

Avoid confusion regarding the nature of cooperatives by accurately distinguishing them from organizations in the public sector. The following affirmation is confusing: “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.” Page 10. This sentence suggests that cooperatives belong to the public sector. Clarify that cooperatives are autonomous enterprises within the private sector, as outlined by the International Cooperative Alliance's principles ^[1]. The 4th Principle of cooperation: “Autonomy and Independence » means that members of co-operatives are entitled to make decisions about their cooperative without undue influence from government. Cooperatives are independent enterprises belonging to the private sector.

Conclusion:

To enhance the comprehensibility and rigor of this paper, it is imperative to address the aforementioned points. A clear delineation of the cooperative under study, transparent methodology, and conceptual precision are essential for advancing scholarly discourse on the role of consumer cooperatives in socioeconomic development, particularly in Ethiopia.

^[1] - The International Cooperative Alliance **unites, represents and serves** cooperatives worldwide. Founded in 1895, it is one of the oldest non-governmental organisations and one of the largest ones measured by the number of people represented: **1 billion cooperative members on the planet**. It is the apex body representing cooperatives, which are estimated to be around 3 million worldwide, providing a global voice and forum for knowledge, expertise, and coordinated action for and about cooperatives.