

# Review of: "Factors Influencing Smallholder Farmers' Preference for Veterinary Services Providers in Zimbabwe"

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**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

Generally, the manuscript is timely, and I believe that it will contribute knowledge to the existing theory in the field of animal health vis-a-vis the service provision. I found the manuscript important and enjoyed reading it. Here are my comments that might contribute their own to further enrich the manuscript. The comments are given section wise starting from the very title of the paper.

**Title:** Better to say "...veterinary **service** providers..." for ease of reading.

## 1. Introduction

- Better to re-write paragraph 6 as: To accomplish these goals, a mixed-method approach **is** employed, integrating quantitative data from a survey questionnaire and qualitative data from in-depth interviews **and focus group discussions. With the survey questionnaire we collected** information on farmers' demographic characteristics, livestock management practices, satisfaction levels with different service providers, and their preferences for specific attributes of veterinary services. The in-depth interviews **and focus group discussions provided** a deeper understanding of farmers' decision-making processes and the contextual factors that influence their preferences.
- Better to re-write paragraph 7 as: By examining the factors influencing smallholder farmers' preference for veterinary service providers, this study **generates** valuable knowledge to inform policy and practice. It will help policymakers and stakeholders design targeted interventions that cater to the specific needs and preferences of smallholder farmers, ultimately improving access to quality veterinary services and enhancing livestock health outcomes in Zimbabwe.

## 2. Background to the problem

- First, I prefer the topic to be coined as "Statement of the problem".
- This section is obsessed with background information on the existing challenges regarding animal health service provision. In this section, readers expect what previous studies related to this study did find out and what their limitations/gaps were that this study will bridge. Objectives of the study have to be shown here too. Thus, I suggest this section to be revisited.

## 3. Literature review

### Choice of Veterinary Services Providers

- In paragraph four, include the area where the study was conducted as you did for other studies mentioned. I expect it to be Ethiopia.
- So, what conclusion do you draw from such studies? Without this, your review seems simply a report of what has been done so far in the area of your research interest.

#### 4. Materials and methods

##### Sampling Procedure

- Better to recoin this section as **“Sampling Procedure and Sample Size”**
- You should show the population (households) in the 4 villages and then the sample distribution based on the appropriate sample size determination formula. No such formula is specified here to draw **382 sample respondents** (indicated in the abstract) for the study.

##### Data Collection

- In this section, you claimed that ‘a convergent parallel design’ is utilized. What is your justification for using this approach over the sequential or any other approach to collect qualitative and quantitative data?
- How many members were involved in each FGD?
- Regarding observation, it is better to mention at least the major issues observed during the data collection period.

##### Data Analysis

- You should specify the multivariate probit model.
- Little is said about the dependent variable (farmers' preferences of AH service providers) and its nature (continuous, categorical). What are the options of service provisions available in the area? Are they ordered or nominal? Clarifying these will dictate the choice of the econometric model to be applied for the study.
- How were the qualitative data analyzed? Nothing is said.

#### 4. Result

- This section should be coined as **“Results and discussion”**, especially for the model result, since it includes the discussion part too. Otherwise, put only the results and take the discussion part if you want to continue with the topic “Result”.

##### Major constraints to livestock production

- Generally, I suggest proofreading the entire manuscript to avoid editorial problems like “...This aligns with the finding of Mutambara et al. (2013) in Gutu District where **100% percent** of the respondents,..” (First paragraph line 2 of this section).
- In the same paragraph, the last sentence states that **During FGDs, it was highlighted that apart from nutrition-related disorders, most of the diseases occurred between November and April.** What are the reasons for this if

there were some pointed out by the group discussants?

#### Determinants of preferred Veterinary Services providers

- The figures reported for the Wald chi-square test and the simulated maximum likelihood ratio test do not coincide with what is reported in Table 1.
- The type and number of independent variables (claimed to be 12 in #) are not consistent across the three choices (dependent variables). Is there any justification for their variation in type and number?

#### 6. Discussion and conclusion

- Better to coin this section as “Conclusion and policy implications”. Avoid “discussion” since the text is all about conclusion and policy implications,
- In this section, include the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.