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Assessment of leadership effectiveness among the executives and members of farmers' cooperative societies in Osun State, Nigeria: Implication for agricultural development

Nijerya'nın Osun Eyaletindeki çiftçi kooperatif birliklerinin yöneticileri ve üyeleri arasındaki liderlik etkinliğinin değerlendirilmesi: Tarımsal kalkınmaya etkisi

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Recieved / Geliş: 20.10.2023 Accepted / Kabul: 30.12.2023</p> <p>Keywords: Agricultural development Constraints Farmers' cooperative leaders Performance Socio-economic attributes</p> <p>Anahtar Kelimeler: Tarımsal kalkınma Kısıtlamalar Çiftçi kooperatifi liderleri Performans Sosyo-ekonomik özellikler</p> <p>✉Corresponding author/Sorumlu yazar: Michael FAMAİNWA mfamakinwa@oauife.edu.ng</p> <p>Makale Uluslararası Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 Lisansı kapsamında yayınlanmaktadır. Bu, orijinal makaleye uygun şekilde atıf yapılması şartıyla, eserin herhangi bir ortam veya formatta kopyalanmasını ve dağıtılmasını sağlar. Ancak, eserler ticari amaçlar için kullanılamaz.</p> <p>© Copyright 2022 by Mustafa Kemal University. Available on-line at https://dergipark.org.tr/pub/mkutbd</p> <p>This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International License.</p> <p></p>	<p>The study assessed the leadership effectiveness among the executives and members of farmers' cooperative societies in Osun State, Nigeria. A structured interview schedule was used to gather quantitative data from 50 executives and 75 members of farmers' cooperative societies across the state. Data were processed through IBM SPSS version 23. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that the majority (84%, 78.7%) of leaders and members were male and members were male while (98%, 94.5 %) were married with a mean age of 47.46 ± 13.73 and 40.36 ± 10.13 years. Also, the majority of the cooperative leaders emerged through election and mostly selected into leadership position based on active participation in cooperative activities. The majority of the leaders were very effective in leading discussions during meetings (mean=2.90) and managing cooperatives operations (mean=2.63). Also, irregular payment of loans and inadequate trainings were the problems facing leadership effectiveness. Years of farming experience (r= 0.788) and years of cooperative membership (r= 0.731) were significantly related to leadership effectiveness. It is concluded that, in order to enhance leaders' effectiveness and consequently, agricultural development, capacity building through regular training, and workshops should be organised by relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>ÖZET</p> <p>Bu çalışmada, Nijerya'nın Osun Eyaletindeki çiftçi kooperatifi derneklerinin yöneticileri ve üyeleri arasındaki liderlik etkinliği değerlendirilmiştir. Eyalet çapındaki çiftçi kooperatiflerinin 50 yöneticisinden ve 75 üyesinden niceliksel veri toplamak için yapılandırılmış bir görüşme programı kullanılmıştır. Veriler IBM SPSS sürüm 23 aracılığıyla işlenmiştir. Verilerin analizinde tanımlayıcı ve çıkarımsal istatistikler kullanılmıştır. Bulgular, lider ve üyelerin çoğunluğunun (%84, %78,7) erkek, üyelerin ise erkek olduğunu, ortalama yaşlarının ise 47,46±13,73 ve 40,36±10,13 yıl olduğunu, (%98, %94,5) evli olduklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Ayrıca kooperatif liderlerinin çoğunluğu seçim yoluyla ortaya çıkmış ve çoğunlukla kooperatif faaliyetlerine aktif katılıma dayalı olarak liderlik pozisyonuna seçilmişlerdir. Liderlerin çoğunluğunun toplantılar sırasındaki tartışmaları yönlendirmede (ortalama=2,90) ve kooperatif operasyonlarını yönetmede (ortalama=2,63) oldukça etkili olduğu belirlenmiştir. Ayrıca kredilerin düzensiz ödenmesi ve yetersiz eğitimler de liderliğin etkinliğinin karşılaştığı sorunlar arasındadır. Çiftçilik deneyimi yılı (r= 0,788) ve kooperatif üyeliği yılı (r= 0,731) liderlik etkinliği ile önemli ölçüde ilişkili görülmüştür. Liderlerin etkinliğini ve dolayısıyla tarımsal kalkınmayı artırmak için ilgili paydaşlar tarafından düzenli eğitimler yoluyla kapasite geliştirme ve çalıştaylar düzenlenmesi gerektiği sonucuna varılmıştır.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is one of the largest contributors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Nigeria's economy with an estimated 30% of the total GDP (Statista, 2023). Thus, the sector holds a significant position in the nation's economy by providing food for consumption, raw materials for industry and export produce for foreign exchange earnings. Hailemariam (2017), Yamusa and Adefila (2014) and Nlerum and Ogu (2014) observed that despite the significance of the sector, its performance over some decades has not been encouraging because of its low productivity, low incomes and shrinkage of agricultural labour. Yamusa and Adefila (2014) observed further that, for the country to feed its citizens, reduce poverty and attain a satisfactory level of sustainable economic growth, the poor performance in the agricultural sector must be addressed. One of the ways to address the problem is through the collective effort of farmers whereby they come together and pool their resources to achieve the common goal of enhanced productivity (Nlerum & Ogu, 2014). This coming together and gathering of resources of farmers is what is otherwise known as farmers cooperatives or agricultural cooperatives.

Attah (2018) conceptualised cooperatives as independent groups of people that come together voluntarily to address their shared needs in terms of economics, social, and cultural issues through jointly owned businesses that are subjected to democratic control. Cooperatives are controlled and operated by the leaders on behalf of the members. There are different types of cooperatives across the different fields of human endeavour such as credit cooperatives, consumers' cooperatives and farmers' cooperatives. However, this study focuses on farmers' cooperatives otherwise known as agricultural cooperatives. An agricultural cooperative is an economic and social organisation in rural areas that contribute significantly to the growth of agricultural sector by providing credits supports and inputs (such as seeds, fertilisers, and other agrochemicals) to farmers. In addition, Nnadozie et al. (2015) also stated that farmers' cooperatives provide members with the necessary knowledge and skills, especially on new agricultural methods that aim at increasing productivity, and therefore, promoting the rural societies. In addition, farmers' co-operative societies are formed to perform several functions including promotion of agricultural product marketing services of members, boosting competition in the agricultural services industry, and giving members access to savings and credit. The creation of agricultural cooperatives gives small-holder farmers a greater opportunity (Yamusa & Adefila, 2014).

According to Farmsquare (2023), the governance structure of farmers cooperatives in Nigeria is dependent on the type of farmers cooperatives in question, whether those in production, marketing, consumption, or credits, in order to meet the cooperatives' specific activities and aims. Every cooperative's board of directors (leaders) are elected by the members to oversee the cooperative's operations and make crucial decisions concerning the cooperative's direction and operations. Furthermore, members of various committees such as finance committee or marketing committee are accountable for specific aspects of the cooperative's operations. As a result, a solid governance structure for the cooperative would aid its long-term profitability and sustainability. Furthermore, the organizational structure of Nigerian farmers cooperatives adheres to the global pyramidal structure of three levels, beginning with the village/community level known as primary society, where individual members of the community join cooperatives and adhere to cooperative principles as stated in the bye-laws. The federation of primary societies is known as union, and the final level is the entire cooperative system at the state or federal levels, which is known as apex.

Agricultural cooperatives serve as a platform through which both government and non-government programmes and initiatives are implemented in rural areas with the aim of enhancing the well-being and livelihoods of rural communities. In the Nigeria context, farmers' cooperative societies are recognized as essential tools for fostering agricultural development in rural communities. They play pivotal roles in various aspects of agricultural activities, as noted by Virendra et al. (2015). They contribute significantly to resource and input utilization, water resource management, marketing and market information, storage, distribution and value addition to agricultural produce,

and the establishment of a systematic monitoring network. Also, to economic activities like credit disbursement and the distribution of agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, and agrochemicals. Farmers' cooperatives are instrumental to advancing the interests of the resource-poor members of the society, including the farmers. They are widely acknowledged as crucial tools for empowering smallholder farmers, helping them to overcome constraints that impede their occupational endeavours by using collective approach that enables them to achieve better than individually. By enhancing economic empowerment and collective bargaining power, cooperatives mitigate risks faced by farmers in the market. Ojimba et al. (2018) emphasized that participating in cooperative organizations, particularly farmers' cooperatives, leads to increased agricultural productivity. Moreover, the establishment of cooperative organizations brings priceless benefits like enhanced food availability, greater productivity, and assistance in securing more reasonable prices for farmers' produce when sold collectively—a benefit that makes a substantial contribution to the local farmers' agricultural development. Nlerum and Ogu (2014) asserted that farmers' cooperatives play significant roles in rural development by advancing agricultural development, encouraging community growth, supporting rural-based industries, encouraging participation in rural projects, providing financial support for such projects, and creating job opportunities. They also have great impact on human resources development in terms of fostering community cohesion for cooperative problem-solving, developing leaders to manage different rural groups, alleviating poverty, and improving the welfare of women and young people. Nlerum and Ogu (2014) also observed that farmers' cooperatives have enabled the consolidation of fragmented land and facilitated investment in mechanization and irrigation. They enhanced the ability to negotiate for the procurement of farm tools and inputs at reduced expenses and sell farm products to traders at more favourable prices. They established storage facilities for farmers and fostered a conducive environment for banks to provide agricultural credit, consequently boosting agricultural productivity and elevating the income levels of cooperative members.

However, effective leadership is very germane in coordinating and motivating members of the cooperatives towards achieving their common goals and fostering the success of their respective societies. Leadership plays a very important role in achieving cooperatives functions. According to Akangbe et al. (2014), cooperative projects are driven by their leaders. The future of every cooperative society depends on the ability to identify, nurture, and develop active and dedicated leaders. Adefila and Madaki (2014) also found a strong correlation between the effectiveness of farmers' cooperatives in achieving agricultural development and the quality of their leadership. Leadership therefore, according to Afolayan et al. (2021) is a pattern of behaviour which aims at integrating group interest with the members' interests while Ofuoku (2012) defined it as a process whereby an individual directs, guides, influences or controls the thoughts of other members of a social system. Similarly, Echetama et al. (2017) posited that a leader is someone who goes first or has the authority to direct others to achieve the cooperative goals. Farmers' cooperative leaders are members of the cooperative society that are selected or elected to represent the society and their responsibility is to influence others to achieve mutual goals and objectives of the society. They must flow with the group they lead. The leadership of the farmers' cooperative is dependent on the individual's leadership skills and abilities. For the leaders to perform their roles effectively, there is the need for cooperation from the members of the cooperative.

One of the crucial challenges facing agricultural development in Nigeria revolves around the need to create appropriate organizations and institutions to effectively mobilize and encourage members of the rural sector towards increased productivity (ICA, 2010). As such, rural farmers who are characterized by low income, low resource utilization, small farm holdings and scattered farmland, find it difficult to pool their resources together to raise their farm income and substantially improve their living conditions, of which, the emergence of cooperatives serves as a promising and practical economic option of providing a strong alternative for the farmers (Ibitoye, 2012). The cooperative organization offers the best machinery for reaching the masses of small-scale farmers (Ibitoye, 2012). However, the findings of studies conducted in Ethiopia by Bezabih (2012) and Karunakaran and Huka (2018)

highlighted some problems associated with cooperative societies to include weak coordination, limited assistance from the government, low capacity of cooperative leadership, and inadequate capacity building support by agencies. Also, Muhammed and Lee (2015) and Mina (2019) identified lack of committed leadership with low capacity of leaders, lack of good governance (management), poor attitude and corruption, and lack of knowledge and skills as problems facing cooperative societies. These problems are detrimental to effective performance of cooperative leaders. In Nigeria, despite the laws and regulations guiding the operations of farmers cooperatives coupled with the like-mindedness of members and large membership, the performance records of some farmers' cooperatives are unpredictable and unreliable as some of them are still struggling to render desirable services to meet the needs of their members. This may be traced to multiple challenges facing cooperative societies in Nigeria which include the inability of members to bear risk, lack of members' commitment, and the expectation of high returns on investment, lack of proper coordination, poor administrative skills, poor managerial acumen and poor leadership. However, past studies in cooperatives have identified leadership as one of the crucial factors attributed to success or failures of cooperatives organisation since strong governance would ensure the cooperative's long-term success and sustainability (Adefila, 2012; Garnevska et al., 2011; Mohamad & Majid 2014). Therefore, this study focused on leadership effectiveness of farmers' cooperative because the quality of leadership was significantly related to farmers' cooperatives effectiveness for agricultural development as reported by Adefila and Madaki, (2014). This is because effective cooperative leaders are expected to efficiently manage cash, personnel as well as their societies' business and assets if farmers' cooperatives are to bring about socio-economic change and improvement in the welfare their members, alleviate problems of lack of funds, enhance technological innovations transfer to farmers, facilitate savings as well as contribute to rural development. Several studies (Adefila, 2012; Adefila & Madaki, 2014; Akangbe et al., 2012; Simkhada & Bhattarai, 2023) have accessed the roles of farmers' cooperatives in agricultural development, the leadership styles of farmers' cooperatives leaders and attributes of cooperatives leaders that could enhance their performance. However, little is known about the effectiveness of farmers' cooperative leaders in their role performance, hence, this study would bridge this knowledge gap. It specifically described the demographic attributes of leaders and members of farmers' cooperatives in the study area; ascertain methods and criteria used for selecting leaders; and identify the problems associated with the performance of cooperative leadership roles with a view to determine the effectiveness of leaders in performing their roles. The study also tested for a significant relationship between selected demographic attributes of cooperative leaders and their effectiveness in role performance.

MATERIALS and METHODS

Study area and sampling technique

The study was carried out in Osun State, Nigeria. Osun State is an agrarian state which has thirty Local Government Areas (LGAs). The state has three agricultural zones based on Osun State Agricultural Development Programme classification; namely Osogbo zones with 13 LGAs, Ife/Ijesa with 10 LGAs and Iwo with 7 LGAs. Both leaders and members of farmers' cooperative societies were the study population. Members of farmers' cooperatives were included in the sample frame to serve as a control group to clarify and validate information given by their leaders as used by Dayanandan and Huka (2019) in cooperative leadership study conducted in Ethiopia. A list of registered farmers' cooperative groups across the three Agricultural zones of Osun State was obtained from Osun Agricultural Development Programme. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select the respondents. In the first stage, Oshogbo and Iwo zones were purposively selected out of the three zones due to their higher number of registered farmers' cooperative groups. In the second stage, three Local Government Areas (LGAs) were purposively selected from each of the chosen zones based on the concentration of farmers' cooperative societies. These are: Ayedire, Ejigbo and Olaoluwa LGAs from the Iwo zone with Ede South, Egbedore and Orolu LGAs from Oshogbo zone. In the

third stage, 20% of the farmers' cooperative societies were randomly selected from all the selected LGAs to give a total of 25 cooperative societies, which translated into 4 farmers' cooperatives out of 20 in Ayedire, 7 out of 35 in Ejigbo, 4 out of 20 in Olaoluwa, 5 out of 25 in Ede south, 3 out of 15 in Egbedore and 2 out of 10 in Orolu LGAs. At the final stage, 2 executive members (president and general secretary) and 3 ordinary members who are active in cooperative activities were purposively selected for the interview to give necessary information required from each of the chosen groups, which translated into 50 leaders and 75 members, making a total of 125 respondents as shown in Table 1. Data were collected using interview schedule from both leaders and members. Data were processed through IBM version 23. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistical analyses were used to analyse the data. The Figure 1 below shows map of the study area.

Table 1. Sampling procedure showing the population for the study

Çizelge 1. Çalışma için popülasyonu gösteren örnekleme yöntemi

Zones	LGAs	Total number of Farmers cooperative groups	20% of cooperatives selected.	Number of leaders selected	Number of members selected	Total members selected
Iwo	Ayedire	20	04	2x4 = 8	3x4 = 12	20
	Ejigbo	35	07	2 x7=14	3x7= 21	35
	Olaoluwa	20	04	2x 4 = 8	3x4 = 12	20
Oshogbo	Ede south	25	05	2 x5 =10	3x5 = 15	25
	Egbedore	15	03	2 x3 =6	3x3= 9	15
	Orolu	10	02	2x2= 4	2x3= 6	10
Total	6	125	25	50	75	125

Source: Osun State Agricultural Development Programme Office Iwo, 2022.

Osun LGAs

- Aiyedaade
- Aiyedire
- Boluwaduro
- Boripe
- Ede North
- Ede South
- Egbedore
- Ejigbo
- Ifedayo
- Ifelodun
- Ila
- Irepodun
- Irewole
- Isokan
- Iwo
- Odo-Otin
- Ola-Oluwa
- Olorunda
- Orolu
- Osogbo
- Atakumosa East
- Atakumosa West
- Ife North
- Ife Central
- Ife East
- Ife South
- Ilesha East
- Ilesha West
- Oriade

ZONES

- Osogbo
- Iwo
- Ife/Ijesa

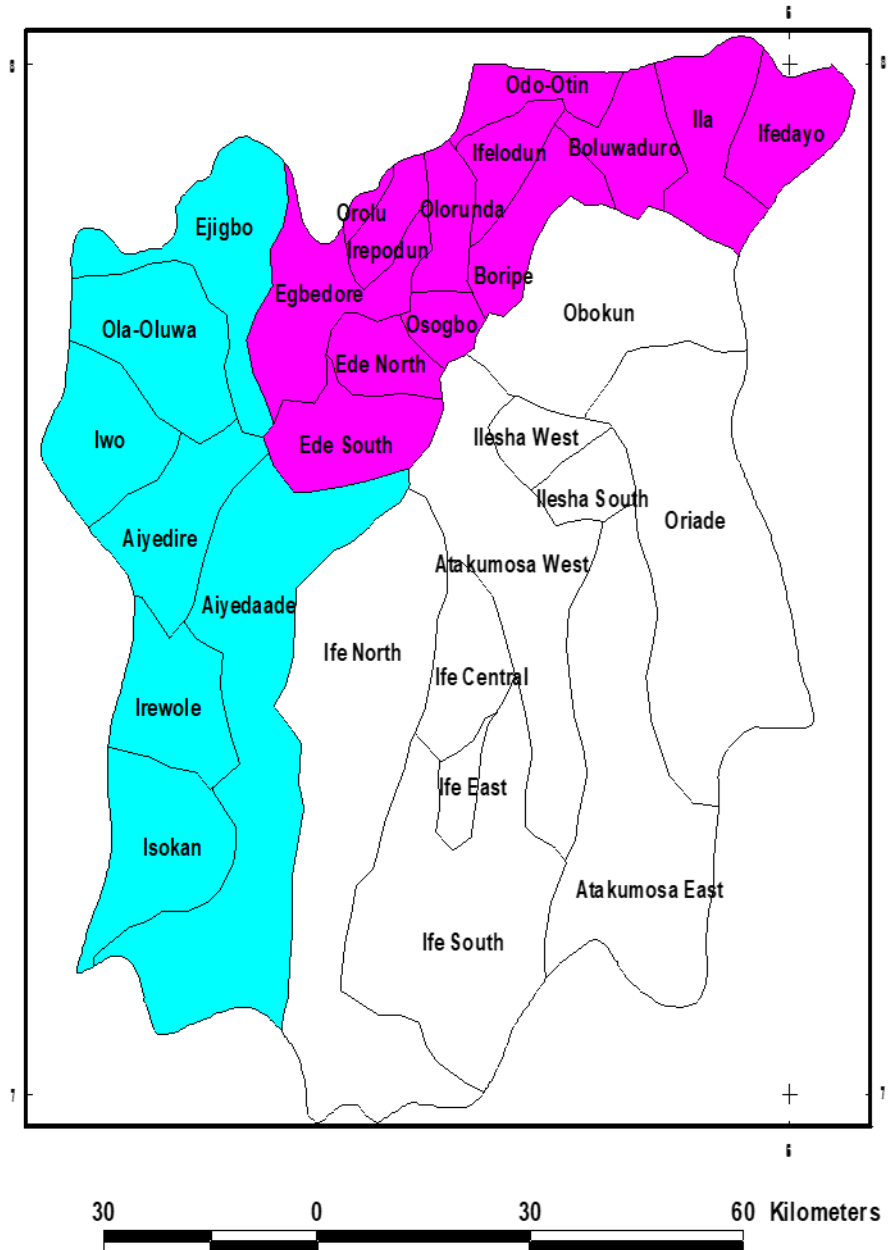


Figure 1. Map of Osun State showing 30 LGAs by agricultural zones

Şekil 1. Tarım bölgelerine göre 30 LGA'yı gösteren Osun Eyaleti haritası

Measurement of variables

The dependent variable for this research was the effectiveness of farmers' cooperative societies' leaders in the performance of their associations' activities. This was conceptualized by the extent to which cooperative societies' leaders effectively performed leadership roles in cooperative activities using a scale of 0-3 to rate leaders' performance in 16 leadership activities. Respondents' rating of zero means not effective, one means less effective, 2 means effective and 3 means very effective. The total score for each respondent was calculated and this formed the leadership effectiveness score. The maximum and minimum score obtainable were 48 and 0 respectively. Leadership effectiveness level was determined by using equal interval approach as used by Adisa (2022), Deji et al.

(2023) and Famakinwa et al. (2023). This was achieved by calculating the range of the leadership effectiveness score and divide it by two to categorise the respondents into high and low levels of leadership effectiveness. That is, maximum score (48) minus minimum score (0), the result (48) generated was then divided by 2 to give the width of (24 points) for each of the respondents. Thus, any respondent with a leadership effectiveness score of less than or equal to 24 was regarded as low, while respondents whose effectiveness score was above 24 were regarded as high. Criteria for leadership selection was measured by asking the respondents (members) to indicate the conditions they considered before choosing their leaders and each response was scored one point while problems associated with leadership effectiveness were measured by requesting the respondents (both members and leaders) to rate the problems affecting the effective performance of leaders using a scale 0-2, where 2 points was assigned to major problem, 1 point was given to minor problem and zero point was given to no problem. Years of formal education in Nigeria is measured in terms of the number of years an individual spent in elementary school, secondary school and tertiary institution to acquire knowledge and skill. In Nigeria context, people are expected to spend maximum of six years in elementary schools, another maximum of six years in secondary school and minimum of three years in tertiary institution depending on the type of institution attended.

RESULTS and DISCUSSIONS

Demographic attributes

Table 1 shows that the mean household size of leaders and members were 6 ± 3 persons and 5 ± 2 persons respectively. This result implies that both the leaders and members have moderate household sizes. It is evident from this result that the age-long tradition of farmers in the study area of having many children with the aim of using them for farm labour is no longer in practice as farmers now send their children to school. This aligns with Faniyi et al. (2020), who opined that rural households are gradually moving away from the traditional way of having large household sizes for farm labour. Also, the mean years of formal education of leaders and members were 14.2 ± 3.7 years and 13.9 ± 3.4 years. This implies that both leaders and members were literate but leaders had a bit higher educational status than their members. This shows that leaders stand a better chance of accessing more information that could assist the members and enhance their active participation in cooperative activities. Besides, both leaders and members obtained credits mostly from cooperatives societies (86%, 74.7%) and personal savings (74 %, 73.3%), signifying that the majority of them obtained farm credits from their cooperative societies. This reflects one of the benefits derived by farmers who belong to a cooperative society. The study also reveals that majority of leaders and members sourced agricultural information from farmers' cooperatives (90%, 85.3%), and extension agents (84%, 74.7%). The result implies that although the majority of the respondents had multiple sources of obtaining agriculture-related information, farmers' cooperative societies was the foremost. This shows further that farmers' cooperative societies constitute the major platforms where rural farmers obtain relevant information and receive training on improved agricultural practices. The result reveals that the majority (78 %, 84 %) of leaders and members of farmers' cooperative societies engaged in farming as primary source of occupation although they still engaged in other livelihood activities. This supports the results of Dayanandan and Huka (2019) who reported that majority of leaders and members of farmers' cooperatives were engaging in farming activities. The results also reveal that the mean years of farming experience of leaders and members were 19.2 ± 12.6 years and 15.7 ± 8.2 years, respectively. This implies that although both leaders and their members had enough farming experience, leaders of cooperative societies had more farming experience than their members which could influence their performance. The finding is at variance from that of Yamusa and Adefila (2014) and Ofuoku (2015) who reported that members of farmers' cooperative societies had longer years of farming experience. The mean farm size of leaders and members were 3.8 ± 2.4 hectares and 3.2 ± 2.03 hectares respectively, implying that the majority of the leaders and members had small farm sizes. This agrees with the findings of Yamusa and Adefila

(2014) and Ofuoku (2015), that the majority of farmers were operating on a small scale and unable to benefit from economies of scale hence resorting to cooperative organizations. Further results show that the mean annual income of the leaders and members were N1,581,000:00 \pm N935,223.85 and N1,286,666.67 \pm N 855,662.14 respectively which (at 1USD = N 600), are equivalent to US\$2635 \pm US\$1558.71 for leaders and US\$2,144.44 \pm US\$1426.10 for members. The average monthly income of leaders and members were N132,000 and N107,000 (US\$220 and US\$178.33) respectively. This shows that the respondents earn above the national minimum wage of N30,000 (50US\$) per month, suggesting that their livelihood activities are sustainable as majority of both leaders and members were living above the international poverty line of 1.9 US\$ per day. This also implies that leaders have higher economic status than their members. This might be one of the reasons for electing them into leadership positions in their various cooperative societies. Evidence in Table 1 shows that the leaders' and members' mean years of membership in farmers' cooperative societies were 12.6 \pm 10.4 years and 7.6 \pm 5 years, respectively. This shows that although both leaders and members had spent a good number of years in cooperative societies, the leaders had stayed longer than the members. This could translate into leaders having more experienced in cooperative activities than their members and could also enhance their performance because longer years of membership could increase their wealth of experiences. This finding agrees with the findings of Dayanandan and Huka (2019) who posited that members who have stayed longer in the cooperative societies would have a possibility of possessing knowledge about the objectives, activities, and benefits of their associations and have a stronger sense of ownership than new members.

Table 2. Respondents' demographic features

Çizelge 2. Katılımcıların demografik özellikleri

Variables	Leaders (n=50)			Members (n=75)		
	Freq	%	Mean \pm SD	Freq.	%	Mean \pm SD
Age						
≤40	18	36	47.46 \pm 13.73	42	56	40.36 \pm 10.13
41-60	26	52		32	42.7	
61+	6	12		1	1.3	
Sex						
Male	42	84		59	78.7	
Female	8	16		16	21.3	
Marital Status						
Single	1	2		4	5.5	
Married	49	98		71	94.5	
Household Size						
≤5	20	40	6 \pm 3	43	57.3	5 \pm 2
6-10	26	52		30	40	
11+	4	8		2	2.7	
Years of Formal Education						
≤6 (Primary schools)	4	8	14.22 \pm 3.7	4	5.3	13.88 \pm 3.4
7-12 (secondary school)	14	28		33	44	
≥13 (Tertiary institution)	32	64		38	50.6	
**Sources of Farm Credit						
Friends and neighbours	29	58		49	65.3	
Personal savings	37	74		55	73.3	
Farmers cooperatives	43	86		56	74.7	
Microfinance bank	8	16		10	13.3	
Agricultural banks	7	14		10	13.3	
Commercial banks	5	10		4	5.3	
**Sources of Information						

Table 2 (continued). Respondents' demographic features

Çizelge 2 (devamı). Katılımcıların demografik özellikleri

Relatives and friends	32	64		63	84	
Extension agents	42	84		56	74.7	
Farmers Cooperatives	45	90		64	85.3	
Radio	21	42		33	44	
Television	17	34		25	33.3	
Online media	24	48		33	44	
Occupation						
Farming	39	78		63	84	
Civil service	5	10		6	8	
Marketing of agricultural produce	1	2		1	1.3	
Artisan	2	4		1	1.3	
Trading	3	6		4	5.3	
Years of membership						
≤20	43	86	12.56±10.04	73	97.3	7.59±5.6
21-40	5	10		2	2.7	
41+	2	4		0	0	
Years of Farming Experience						
≤10	15	30	19.22±12.6	29	38.7	15.72±8.2
11-20	18	36		29	38.7	
≥20	17	34		17	22.6	
Farm Size (Ha)						
≤2	17	34	3.82±2.38	36	48	3.15±2.03
3-4	15	30		17	22.7	
5-6	14	28		18	24	
≥7	4	8		4	5.4	
Annual Income (₺) (1USD = 600)						
≤500000	13.0	26	1,581,000±935,224	28	37.3	1,286,666.7±855,662
500001-1000000	18	36		27	36	
1000001-1500000	6	12		4	5.3	
≥1500001	13	26		16	21.3	

* Multiple responses

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Methods of selecting cooperative leaders

Table 3 shows that the leaders and members indicated that for most of the cooperative societies, leaders were chosen by election (60 %, 54.7%), some by nomination (38 %, 37.3%), and few by consensus (8 %, 2.7%). The result reveals that the majority of the farmers' cooperative societies chose their leaders through democratic means, which gives room for every member of the association to freely participate. This method of leadership selection is considered to be the fairest as leaders selected through this method would likely use the participatory leadership approach that gives room for adept leaders-followers relationship contrary to what happens when the leader is imposed. This aligns with the discovery of Akangbe et al. (2014), who asserted that in farmers' cooperative societies, a democratic leadership style is preferred as this gives room for more participation of members in every decision and empowerment.

Table 3. Respondents' leadership selection methods

Çizelge 3. Katılımcıların liderlik seçim yöntemleri

Variables	Leaders (n=50)		Members (n=75)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Voting	32.0	64.0	41.0	54.7
Nomination	19.0	38.0	28.0	37.3
Consensus	4.0	8.0	14.0	18.7
Appointment/ Government imposition	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.7

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Criteria for selecting farmers' cooperative leaders

Evidence in Table 4 was based on members' judgment and the results show that members claimed that the criteria mostly considered in selecting members into leadership positions include contribution and active participation in association activities (93.3%), competence in cooperative activities (93.3%), integrity and honesty (93 %), experience in cooperative activities (92 %), good communication skills (85.3%), good mobilization skill (85.3%), problem solving ability (80%) and hard work (73.3%). The result reveals that past contributions to the association and active participation, competence in cooperative activities and integrity/honesty were mostly sought after before selecting members to hold any leadership position in farmers' cooperative societies. This implies that members of farmers' cooperative societies cherish honesty, competence and individual contributions to cooperative societies' activities as these characteristics might ensure transparency and accountability in all transactions and dealings as indicated by Famakinwa et al. (2019) especially in the management of cooperative societies' resources like shares, dividends and savings. It is also expected that those at the helms of cooperative affairs should be above-board for cooperatives to have sound footing. This result agrees with the findings of Ofuoku (2012) who identified characteristics such as problem-solving skills, mobilization skills, communication skills, self-confidence and integrity/honesty as part of the criteria used to choose farmers' group leaders.

Table 4. Criteria used for selecting farmers' cooperative societies' leaders

Çizelge 4. Çiftçi kooperatifi liderlerini seçme kriterleri

* Criteria	Members (n=75)	
	Freq	Percent
Contributions to and active participation in cooperative societies	70	93.3
Competence in cooperative activities	70	93.3
Integrity and honesty	70	93.3
Experience in cooperative activities	69	92
Good communication skill	64	85.3
Mobilization skill	64	85.3
Problem-solving ability	60	80
Hard-work/diligence	55	73.3
Successful farm business	50	66.7
Educational level	40	53.3
Fame and popularity	8	10.7
Economic prowess	14	18.7
Gender	3	4
Religious belief	2	2.7

*Multiple responses

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Effectiveness of farmers' cooperatives leaders in performing cooperative activities

The effectiveness of cooperative leaders is a cornerstone for the better performance of any cooperative society as this ensures provision of quality services to the members in forms of alleviating the problems of lack of funds, increasing the bargaining power and capacity of members to invest, enhancement of technological innovations transfer to farmers, facilitating savings as well as contributing to rural development. The results in Table 5 show that the self-assessment by leaders of farmers' cooperative societies indicated they judged themselves to be very effective in performing the roles of leading discussions in meetings and time management (mean=2.90), managing the day-to-day operations of the cooperative societies (mean=2.65) and ensuring loan and dividend are disbursed at the appropriate time (mean=2.56); moderately effective in performing other roles such as managing cooperative societies' resources (mean=2.18) and making sound decisions in the cooperative societies (mean=1.84) among others. However, the members' assessment of their leaders shows that cooperative societies' leaders were moderately effective in performing all their roles in the cooperative activities. The results show that leaders might have overrated themselves or that members were not adequately satisfied with their leaders as members might have been expecting a higher level of effectiveness from them. The implication of the finding is that when cooperative societies' leaders are not as effective as members expected, it can lead to members' poor participation in decision-making, and poor attendance in cooperative meetings among others.

The result in Figure 2 was generated from effectiveness scores obtained from both leaders and members. The Figure shows that the majority (44.8%) of the leaders indicated that they were effective in their role performance and just above half (55.2%) indicated low level of effectiveness. However, majority (70%) of the members rated their leaders as less effective in their role performance in cooperatives activities and nearly one-third (30%) indicated their leaders were effective. The fact that both leaders and members indicated that more than half of the leaders were less effective in their role performance might be due to lack of regular training for cooperative societies' leaders, inadequate knowledge about cooperative management, lack of active participation of members and some unfavourable government policies. This observation should be a thing of concern because of its implications on agricultural development, since no society can perform beyond the ability of the leaders. It is also an indication that cooperative leadership needs special attention in order to achieve the organisational goals of supporting members in pooling their resources together to raise funds for agricultural production. Moreover that the farmers' cooperative societies have important roles to perform in improving agricultural production, marketing, distribution of agricultural inputs and marketing of produce as well as educating farmers and providing increase credit facilities. In addition, most government intervention programmes for farmers are channelled through farmers' cooperative societies thereby, enabling them to influence government ideas and actions that can transform agricultural sector through their common bargaining power. When cooperative societies' leaders are not highly effective in the management of their association affairs, it will negatively affect agricultural production and development as members would not be able to harness the association resources for improved productivity.

Table 5. Leadership effectiveness in performing their roles in cooperative activities as perceived by leaders and members

Çizelge 5. Liderler ve üyeler tarafından algılanan şekilde, işbirlikçi faaliyetlerde rollerini yerine getirmede liderlik etkinliği

Activities	Leaders	Perceived by Members
	Means	Means
Lead discussions in meetings and manage time well	2.90	2.41
Manage the day-to-day operations of the cooperative	2.63	2.31
Ensure loan and dividend are disbursed at the appropriate time	2.56	1.55
Make sound decisions in the cooperative issues	2.24	1.84
Manage cooperative resources	2.18	2.05
Ensure rules and regulations of the cooperative are upheld in decision making	1.99	1.77
Make members understand the cooperative goals and objectives	1.98	1.89
Ensure financial statements are disclosed to members	1.88	1.55
Settle/resolve conflicts among members	1.84	1.84
Ensure members have access to subsidized agricultural inputs and other resources	1.75	1.78
Organize good marketing opportunities for the members	1.72	1.59
Establish good communication among members	1.66	1.67
Manage the cash flow of the cooperative business	1.62	1.58
Encourage membership and active patronage	1.58	1.55
Working for the benefit of members	1.60	1.64
Formulate goals and objectives for the cooperatives	1.58	1.63

Source: Field Survey, 2022

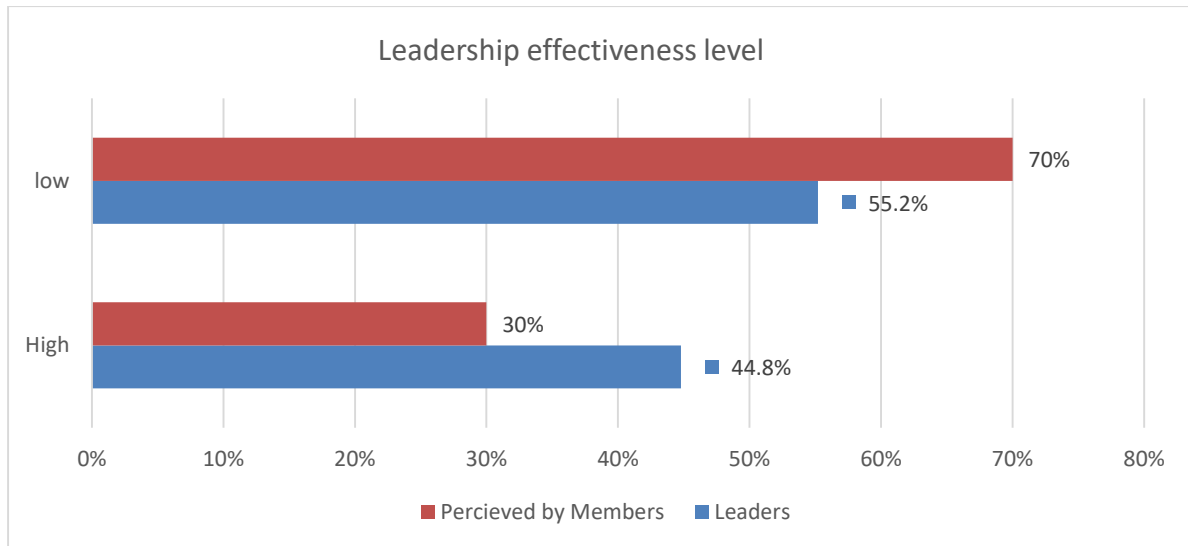


Figure 2. Level of the effectiveness of farmers cooperatives leaders

Şekil 2. Çiftçi kooperatifi liderlerinin etkinlik düzeyi

Problems associated with cooperative leadership effectiveness

The results in Table 6 show that both the leaders and members identified non-regular payment of dues/loans (mean= 1.76; mean= 1.57) and inadequate training and workshops for leaders and members (mean= 1.71; mean= 1.71) as the major problems facing the effectiveness of leaders in performing their roles in cooperative activities. Also, leaders identified the lack of active participation of the members as another major problem (mean=1.62)

whereas the members identified this problem as a minor problem (mean=0.67) in the study area. Furthermore, the leaders identified unclear and unfavourable government policy as a minor problem with a mean score of 1.28 which was similar to that of the members (mean=1.14). Although the leaders stated that partiality and favouritism were not a problem (mean=0.48), the members identified this as a minor problem (mean=1.09). It could be inferred from the results that non-payment of loans was a major problem as many cooperative societies members might have been failing to pay back the loan obtained from their cooperative societies regularly and promptly. In this scenario, one may assume that the leaders' judgment should be relatively reliable since they were the people directly faced with these problems in the course of performing their roles. The results show further that unclear and unfavourable government policies was identified by both the leaders and members as a minor problem. This shows that both categories of respondents might have experienced government interference at one time or the other that might have affected the smooth running of their cooperative societies. For instance, cooperative societies, under the Nigeria constitution, are required to be duly registered, and many of the newly established cooperative organizations find it difficult to meet up with the numerous registration criteria imposed by the government.

Table 6. Problems associated with cooperative leadership effectiveness

Çizelge 6. İşbirliğine dayalı liderlik etkinliğiyle ilgili sorunlar

Problems associated	Leaders Mean	Members Mean
Non-regular payment of dues/loan	1.76	1.59
Inadequate training and workshops for members and leaders	1.71	1.65
Lack of active participation of members	1.62	0.67
Unclear and unfavourable government policy	1.32	1.24
Eviction of loan repayment	1.20	0.91
Partiality and favouritism	0.48	1.09
Gender discrimination	0.38	0.44
Conflict among members	0.36	0.33
Poor communication between leaders and members	0.28	0.24
Poor management	0.24	0.87
Poor leadership style	0.18	0.20
Corruption and embezzlement	0.10	0.56
Lack of competence	0.10	0.71

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Result of correlation analysis

The effectiveness scores obtained from leaders only was used as dependent variable to test for the correlation between demographic attributes and leadership effectiveness. The result in Table 7 shows that there is a significant correlation between years of farming experience ($r = 0.788$, $P \leq 0.01$), years of cooperative membership ($r = 0.731$, $P \leq 0.01$), income ($r = 0.321$, $P \leq 0.05$) and leadership effectiveness. This implies that the higher the years of farming experience of cooperative society leaders, the higher their effectiveness in performing their roles in cooperative activities. Also, it implies that the higher the number of years of their membership, the higher their leadership effectiveness. This is because their many years of active participation in cooperative activities as members would enhance their experiences and make them discharge their responsibilities better, as they might have accumulated more knowledge and strategies that can be used to manage cooperatives, hence enhances their leadership effectiveness. This result gives credence to the submission of Dayanandan and Huka (2019) that membership duration had strong relationship with leadership effectiveness. In the same vein, cooperative leaders with more income, will likely be more effective in performing their roles. This is because it is believed that cooperative leaders that are financially buoyant may not likely be involved in embezzlement or mismanagement of cooperative

societies' funds and resources, thereby influencing their performance. This aligns with the findings of Adefila and Madaki (2014) and Dayanandan and Huka (2019) who established that income influenced role performance of farmers' cooperative leaders and consequently, their effectiveness.

Table 7. Correlation analysis between demographic attributes and cooperative leadership effectiveness

Çizelge 7. Demografik özellikler ile kooperatif liderlik etkinliği arasındaki korelasyon analizi

Variables	r	Sig
Age	0.161	0.264
Household size	-0.147	0.307
Years of formal education	0.215	0.135
Years of farming experience	0.788**	0.000
Years of Membership	0.731**	0.000
Level of income	0.321*	0.023
Farm size	-0.009	0.953

Source: Field survey, 2022.

In conclusion, the study concludes that the majority of the farmers' cooperative societies' members were male, married and were in their middle age and practised agriculture as their main occupation. Also, a larger proportion of both leaders and members obtained their farm credit and agricultural information from farmers' cooperative societies. The majority of the respondents indicated voting as the foremost method of selecting leaders and major criteria used for leadership selection were contribution and active participation in cooperative activities, competence, self-confidence, integrity and honesty among others. Although, leaders claimed they were very effective in cooperative activities such as leading discussions in meetings and managing time well; managing the day-to-day operations of the cooperatives, and disbursing loans and dividends to members at appropriate times, and managing cooperative resources; the study concluded that more than half of the leaders were less effective in the role performance of cooperatives activities. In addition, leaders faced some problems which affected their effectiveness such as delay in loan repayment, lack of active participation of members, and unfavourable and unclear government policies. The years of farming experience, years of membership and income were significantly correlated with cooperative societies' leadership effectiveness. Cooperative leaders should be selected based on competence, integrity, experience and active participation in cooperative to enhance better performance and effectiveness. Cooperative regulatory bodies should be strengthened to monitor the performance of cooperative societies and their leaders. The capacity of cooperative society members and leaders on loan management and repayment should be improved through regular training, seminars and workshops by relevant government and non-governmental organizations/agencies to aid acquisition of necessary managerial skills for their effective performance and consequently, sustainable agricultural development.

STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest for this study.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Famakinwa contributed 50%, Alabi Contributed 30 % while Salawu contributed 20% to this research.

STATEMENT OF ETHICS CONSENT

Ethical approval is not applicable, because this article does not contain any ethical issues of human or animal subjects.

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