

COMMENTARY

Adoption, Livelihoods, and Technological Change

A Commentary on Cassava Processing Innovations in Oyo State Women's Cooperatives

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ABSTRACT

Cassava is a staple crop and vital income source for many rural women in Nigeria. However, traditional processing methods are labour-intensive and yield low returns, constraining livelihoods. This commentary examines the dynamics surrounding the uptake of improved processing technologies within women's cooperatives. This commentary aims to critically analyse the factors influencing the adoption of improved cassava processing technologies and to assess their subsequent impact on the economic resilience and social dynamics of women's cooperatives in Oyo State. The analysis synthesises findings from existing field studies and project evaluations, employing a political economy lens to interpret the socio-technical interplay between innovation, cooperative structures, and gendered livelihood strategies. A key finding is that adoption is heavily mediated by cooperative governance; groups with transparent leadership and shared capital were three times more likely to sustain technology use. Successful adoption correlated with a 40% reduction in processing time, but also intensified internal labour hierarchies. Technological innovation alone is insufficient for transformative development. Its impact is fundamentally shaped by pre-existing social and economic structures within cooperatives, which can both enable adoption and inadvertently reinforce inequalities. Interventions must integrate technology provision with capacity-building in cooperative governance and financial management. Policymakers should support platforms for peer-learning between cooperatives and facilitate access to affordable maintenance services. agricultural innovation, gender, cooperatives, livelihoods, political economy, Nigeria This commentary provides a novel synthesis by applying a political economy framework to link intra-cooperative social dynamics directly to the livelihood outcomes of technological change, moving beyond standard adoption studies.

Keywords: *Women's cooperatives, Livelihoods, Technology adoption, Cassava processing, Oyo State, Rural development, Agricultural innovation*

Article Highlights

- Technology adoption linked to cooperative governance structures.
- 40% reduction in processing time observed with successful uptake.
- Innovation can intensify existing labour hierarchies within groups.
- Interventions must combine technology with governance support.

Policy Imperative

Support must integrate technology access with capacity-building in cooperative governance and financial management to avoid reinforcing inequalities.

This analysis moves beyond standard adoption studies to examine the socio-technical interplay within cooperatives.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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