Microfinance and Health Insurance Adoption Among Female Smallholder Farmers in Senegal: A Financial Literacy Assessment

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Abstract

Microfinance programmes have been implemented in Senegal to support smallholder farmers, but their impact on health insurance adoption has not been extensively studied. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including a structured questionnaire survey and focus group discussions with female smallholder farmers in rural Senegal. Data were collected using snowball sampling techniques. Female respondents exhibited moderate levels of financial literacy (65% correctly identified the monthly cost of health insurance), yet only 40% had access to microfinance services that could support such purchases. Health insurance uptake was significantly higher among those with better financial literacy, indicating a positive correlation between literacy and purchasing decisions. The study highlights the importance of enhancing financial education programmes for female smallholder farmers in Senegal to improve their ability to purchase health insurance through microfinance mechanisms. Microfinance providers should integrate health insurance options into their services, and policymakers should consider implementing targeted financial literacy initiatives to support low-income households. Treatment effect was estimated with $text\{logit\}(\pi) = beta\,0 + \vec{\beta}\,p\,X_i$, and uncertainty reported using confidence-interval based inference.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, African, Socioeconomic, Literacy, Ethnography, Qualitative, Contextual, Female, Indigenous, Fertility, Gender, Access, Healthcare, Systems, Insurance, Financial, Microfinance, Empowerment, Education, Intervention, Development, Senegal*

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