

**EVALUATION OF FACTORS AFFECTING MEMBERS’  
PARTICIPATION AND IDENTIFYING THEIR OVERALL  
PARTICIPATION LEVEL IN MULTIPURPOSE AGRICULTURAL  
COOPERATIVES IN TOKE KUTAYE WOREDA OF WEST SHEWA  
ZONE, OROMIA REGION, ETHIOPIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

This article is aimed to identify the factors affecting members’ participation and evaluate the overall participation level in toke kutaye woreda, west shewa zone, Oromia region, Ethiopia. To achieve the goal the data was collected from primary and secondary sources using semi-structured questionnaires and focus group discussions based on the 290 respondents calculated via a scientific sample size determination. To analyze data, descriptive statistical tools (frequency, percentage, mean, and std. deviation) and a binary logistic regression model were used with the help of SPSS version 24. The result of the binary logistic regression model revealed that age, education level, farm size, annual income, shareholding, patronage, credit access, number of professional employees, position in the cooperative, and distance from the coop center were significant at 1% and 5% confidence levels. In addition to this, lack of feasibility study, poor awareness about cooperative principles and values, inadequate access to training, inadequate markets, poor credit systems, incapable leaders, lack of audit and inspection, seasonal change, and conflicts are some of the causes of passive participation for cooperative members. The study also pointed out that the mean result of the participation index of management activities of the respondents was 0.74 (SD=0.3265). It was medium level. The mean result of the participation index in financial activities of the respondents was 0.29 (SD=0.1155). It was low level. The mean result of the participation index in business activities of the respondents was 0.74 (SD=0.3265). It was high level. Therefore, the overall mean sample score of meaningful participation was 0.54. This shows that medium level of members' participation. Generally the participation of cooperative members’’ was not balanced. They were highly participating in business activities: farm input and output services, medium participation in management activities, and low participation in financial activities. The researcher recommends that cooperative promoters of different levels have to work on improving members’ participation more on financial aspects, management, and business as well.

**Keywords:** multipurpose cooperatives, factors, members’ participation, members

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Agricultural cooperatives also play a major role by providing strong economic benefits to the farmers, through sharing and pooling of resources, improved credit access and market access, higher returns for their products, reduced transaction costs by obtaining inputs up to the warehouses of the cooperatives and by selling their produces on cooperatives center, and strengthened bargaining position. Agricultural cooperatives provide access to quality supplies and services at a reasonable cost, and members organize to have a voice for economic action and local economy enhancement and protection. Through cooperatives, individual households and communities can create opportunities for themselves, to find productive work that not only facilitates their well-being and stability but also give them the support they need to improve their lives and remain active in civil rights and political arenas (Destahun, 2007). Moreover, Agricultural cooperatives currently account for the primary channel through which agricultural inputs reach farmers. The opportunity on the output marketing side is even greater. Although farmers' cooperatives in Ethiopia currently account for less than 40% of the marketed outputs, their members tend to achieve a higher premium price of nearly 10% (ATA, 2019).

Therefore, it is the primary task to assess those factors that hinder cooperative members' participation and creates doubt about the benefits that the members gain from cooperatives. So, these are the possible reasons to limit the members' participation in their cooperatives. Cooperatives are challenged mainly by the weak involvement of their members' indifferent cooperative activities. Such as management factors, financial factors, and business factors. Cooperative organizations are facing the task of transforming and adjusting to a new economic and political environment, market-oriented conditions, and increasing member demands. Moreover, these factors affect members' participation in their cooperative and challenge member loyalty and commitment as well as cooperative performance. In all types of cooperatives generally and in MPAC of Toke Kutaye woreda particularly.

According to Gashaw et al. (2014), increased members' participation in agricultural cooperatives further enhances efficiency gains among smallholder farmers and is a driving force in modernizing the market channels and in creating consumer and producer benefits (Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, 2013). Furthermore, it is generally believed that successfully managed Multipurpose Agricultural Cooperatives have great potential in rural development in general and Agricultural development in particular. Members' participation in activities of primary multipurpose farmers' cooperatives of the study area is getting decreasing from time to time and members' participation level was not identified. If the participation of members continues in this way the sustainability of the cooperative will be challenging. Therefore, having the above issues in mind it is crucial to assess factors affecting members' participation and identify the overall participation level in the case of kutaye woreda, west of the zone, Oromia region, Ethiopia.

## 2.0 THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

### 2.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is to assess the factors influencing members' participation in multipurpose agricultural cooperatives in Toke Kutaye woreda, West Shewa Zone. The Oromia Regional State of Ethiopia.

## Specific objectives

- To assess the level of members' participation in primary multipurpose agricultural cooperatives.
- To evaluate the factors affecting members' participation in primary multipurpose agricultural cooperatives.

## 3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1 Basic Concepts of participation

Cooperatives have long been recognized to play important roles in society to improve the living conditions of their members, particularly the low-income earning portion of the society, as well as the entire population. Co-operative societies being voluntary, democratic, and self-controlled business enterprises, offer the organizational framework through which nearby communities gain control over the productive activities from which they derive their livelihoods (Ofeil, 2005). Participating members tap the energies of group effort and economies of scale to undertake economic activities which they would not have otherwise been able to carry out on their own, thereby boosting their chances to get better living conditions. It is for this reason that cooperatives continue to be promoted in many developing countries around the world as some of the preferred instruments for poverty alleviation. Participation is a process by which members influence the direction, scope, and operations as well as activities of their cooperatives. According to ICA (1995), as cited in Surendran (2000), participation is a process in which two or more teams influence one another in making certain plans, policies, and decisions.

### 3.2 Members' Participation.

Participation is an important indicator in improving farmers' understanding of their cooperative's organization. Member participation is the act of taking part in any activity of society by all members of society. These members will make themselves aware of the problems and have the willingness to contribute to the progress of the cooperatives to ensure the participation of members in the business, financial and managerial concerns of the cooperatives.

According to Borgen (2001), members were seen to be highly devoted to decisions in which they have participated actively rather than decisions that were forced on them. The more members participate in their cooperatives, the more they will be dedicated to their cooperative performance

## 4.0 METHODOLOGIES

### 4.1 Sample size

For the target population of the study, five primary multipurpose agricultural cooperative members were selected purposively. The respondents were selected randomly by using probability proportionate to the size of primary multipurpose agricultural cooperative members. The sample size was determined by a simplified formula suggested by Yamane

(1967). This formula is said to be an easy method to determine the sample size for social science research since 1%-10% the level of precision errors is acceptable for the study purpose (Admas et al, 2007).

$$n = N / 1 + N(e)^2 \quad \text{Where } n = \text{ is the sample size,}$$

N = is the population e = is the level of precision

$$n=1060/ [1 + 1060(0.05)^2], n= 1060/ [1060(0.0025)]n=1060/ [1+2.65], n=1060/3.65n=290$$

## 5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The effective and completed response rate questionnaires were 275. Response rate was 94.8%.

### Analysis of demographic variables of the Sampled Respondents

variables	Categories	frequency	percent	Chi-square Test	phi coefficient (effect size)	Sing 2sided
Age of respondents	18-30	102	43.6	<b>9.695</b>	<b>-0.304</b>	<b>0.042**</b>
	31-50	120	37.1			
	above 50	53	19.3			
<b>Total</b>		<b>275</b>	<b>100%</b>			
sex of respondents	Female	55	20	<b>5.906</b>	<b>0.2 42</b>	<b>0.602</b>
	Male	220	80			
<b>Total</b>		<b>275</b>	<b>100%</b>			
Education level of respondents	Illiterate	23	8.4	<b>13.342</b>	<b>0.342</b>	<b>0.000***</b>
	basic education	77	28			
	Elementary edu.	153	55.6			
	high school	22	8			
<b>Total</b>		<b>275</b>	<b>100%</b>			

The demographic factors of the sample respondents selected from Multipurpose Agricultural Cooperatives indicated that in the study sample 18-30, 31-50, and above 50 categories were 43.6 %, 37.1 %, and 19.3% respectively. The average mean age of the respondents was 31.02 as shown in Table 4.1. The above table also revealed that, among the respondents, 220 (80%) were males, while 55 (20%) were females which indicated a low representation of female members in multipurpose agricultural cooperatives. Moreover, considering respondents' education level, out of the study sample, 55.6% had elementary education or [1-8], 28% had basic education (read and write), and 8% had high school education or [9-12]. While 8.4 % had no formal education. This result showed that more than 50% of the respondents had a primary level of education; 8.4% even have no formal education which is a serious problem that needs consideration because education heightens compassionate of cooperative terms, report, by-law, rules, and regulations of members. The low level of education decreases the

members' participation in cooperatives to contribute to the well-being of the cooperatives and to improve their economy.

## 5.1 Farm size

It is well known that land is one of the most important factors for agricultural production. It plays a central role in producing crops and rearing livestock. Moreover, access to land offers a privilege to get access to agricultural extension services and new agricultural inputs.

### Farm size, annual income, and shareholding characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Unit	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Farm size	Ha	0.5	3.5	1.888	0.696
annual income	ETB	11,900	78,000	28575.3	13472.91
Shareholding	N <sub>0</sub>	1	3	1.33	0.498

The study result presented in Table 4.2.2 above showed that the mean farm size of the study sample was 1.888 (SD= 0.696). The minimum and the maximum farm size of the respondents were 0.5 hectares and 3.5 hectares respectively.

## 5.2 Total annual income:

Annual income is the amount of income the cooperative members can earn in one fiscal year. Depending on the type of cooperative, the members are the ones who provide the services, produce and sell the products, or in some cases, purchase the services or products from or through the cooperative. The study result showed that the annual mean income of the respondents was 28,575.3 (SD=13472.91).

## 5.3 Shareholding

Member share capital represents individual member commitment to the cooperative form of business. The study result showed that the mean of the shareholding of the participants was 1.33 (SD=0.498). This indicates that the majority of the respondents had only one shareholding in the cooperatives.

## 5.4 Patronage dividends

These are those distributions of profits paid by a co-operative to their owners. Patronage dividends are paid based on a portion of the profit of the business.

## 5.5 Patronage fund characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percent
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Patronage fund	No dividend	147	53.4
	100-1500	113	41.1
	1501-3000	15	5.5
	3000-5000	-	-
		275	100

**Source:** field survey, 2021.

According to FDGs majority of the members, 147 (53.4) did not get the patronage. This is because the majority of the cooperatives were not profitable. Even if the sample cooperatives were members of the Farmer Multipurpose Cooperative Union, the member cooperatives did not get the dividend as a form of cash to distribute to the individual members.

## 5.6 Membership duration

The result in the table below shows that 78 (28.4%) were in the category of 1-5 years and 152 (55.2%) of the members were in the category of 6-10 years, 30 (11%) of them were under the category of 11-15 years, and finally, 15(5.6%) of the respondents lied on the category of 16-19 years. This implies the majority of the cooperative members have spent in maximum of ten years serving their multipurpose agricultural cooperatives.

## 5.7 Membership duration characteristics of the respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Membership duration	1-5 years	78	28.4
	6-10 years	152	55.2
	11-15 years	30	11
	16-19 years	15	5.6
		275	100

## 5.8 Market access

It refers to the availability of other market service providers in addition to cooperatives in members' locality.

## Market access status of the respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Market access	Cooperative market	145	52.7
	Alternative market	130	47.3
		275	100

**Source:** field survey, 2021.

The result shows that, comprises 145 (52.7.0%) cooperative markets and 130(47.3%) alternative markets, which implies the majority of cooperative members participate in the cooperative market rather than the alternative market.

## 5.9 Credit service

It refers to the opportunity to get financial credit services from cooperatives to perform different tasks of the cooperative members. Credit support from the cooperative members could serve as a tool for alleviating food insecurity.

### Credit access of the respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Credit access	Access	112	40.7
	Not access	163	59.3
		275	100

**Source:** field survey, 2021.

Table 4.2.8. Shows that, the majority 59.3 % (163) of the respondents did not get credit services but only 40.7 % (112) of the respondents got credit services from their cooperatives. As FGDs, getting financial credit at multipurpose cooperatives is very difficult. The possible reason is that different financial institution that facilitates credit services needs collateral and asks about past trend of using credit services from different organizations. The properties like land and warehouse of the cooperatives are not needed by financial organizations as holdings. So, this case closes the way to obtaining financial credit services from different financial institutions.

## 5.10 A number of professionals. Employees

As stated in cooperative society proclamation number 985/2016 of Ethiopia, any cooperative society shall have professional workers to perform the day-to-day activities of the society. Lack of professionally skilled manpower is a cooperative major challenge. In the study area, members are managed by committees having no cooperative background. Whereas, in principle, cooperatives have unique features for which professionals having cooperative backgrounds are needed to handle technical aspects of society.

### Professional employee status of the respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Professional employee	No trained manpower /professional	175	63.6
	There is trained manpower	100	36.4
		275	100

The survey result indicates that in the majority 63.6% (175) out of 275 respondents the cooperatives had no professional employees, but 36.4 % (100) of the members responded the cooperatives had professional employees.

**5.11 Position in the cooperatives**

Members are the foundation of the cooperative business and are the reason for the existence of the cooperative. They support their cooperative through patronage and capital investment is essential for the cooperative's economic health. So, Cooperative members carry rights and responsibilities by getting a position in their cooperative.

**Position in the cooperative of the respondents**

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Position in the cooperative	No position	232	84.4
	Has position	43	15.6
		275	100

**Source: field survey, 2021**

Results of study Shows that 84.4% (232) of the respondents responded that cooperative members were not positioned in their cooperative business but only 15.6% (43) of the respondents responded that members were positioned at different positions in their cooperative business to participate in different activities for decision making.

**5.12 Distance from coop center.**

It refers to the distance of the cooperative from the members' residence.

**Distance from the cooperative center of the respondents**

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Distance from the cooperative center	near	202	73.5
	far	73	26.5
		275	100

**Source: field survey, 2021**

Results of study Shows that 73.5% (202) of the respondents responded that cooperative center is far away from members' residency but only 26.5% (73) of the respondents responded that the cooperative center is near to members' residence.

**6.0 RESULT OF ECONOMETRIC MODEL ANALYSIS**

**Model summery**

Step 1	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
	<b>47.425</b>	<b>0.685</b>	<b>0.893</b>

**Results of Logistic Regression model of factors affecting of members participation**



	Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>Wald</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Odds ratio</i>
1	Sex/gender of respondent	.228	1.088	.044	1	.834	1.256
2	Age of respondents	-2.812	1.346	4.363	1	.037**	.060
3	Members Share holding	3.734	1.455	6.582	1	.010**	.024
4	Education of respondents	2.797	1.111	6.339	1	.012**	16.399
5	Duration of membership	2.300	1.139	4.081	1	.43	9.978
6	Number of professional	1.276	1.009	1.600	1	.040 **	3.581
7	Farm size of respondent	2.446	1.096	4.976	1	.026**	11.541
8	Total annual Income	3.032	1.346	5.078	1	.001**	20.743
9	Market access to members	2.410	1.298	3.445	1	.032	11.129
10	Credit access to members	2.893	1.200	5.817	1	.016**	18.051
11	Patronage refund	4.705	1.893	6.177	1	.013**	110.48
12	Position in the coop	2.440	1.177	4.298	1	.038**	11.474
13	distance from coop center	2.824	1.265	4.988	1	.026**	16.849
14	Members' perceptions	3.12	1.239	3.939	1	0.139	13.939
15	Constant	17.412	5.481	10.091	1	.001	.000

**Source:** Spss output of field survey data, 2020

Sex, Edu.Level, Farm Size, Total annual Income, Shareholding, Patronage, Du/membership, Market access, Credit access, number of professional employees, Position in the coop, distance from coop center, and Members' perceptions. These variables have entered into the model and direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of a number of factors on the likelihood that respondents would participate or not. Among fourteen variables entered in the model three variables namely (gender, membership duration. and members' perception towards service rendered) were found insignificant or not fit the model while the rest were statistically significant,  $\chi^2=109.398$ ,  $N=275$ ,  $p<0.0005$ . The effects of the significant explanatory variables on the participation of members were discussed below.

### 6.1 Age of respondents

Analysis of the binary Logistic regression model showed that variable age has a negatively significant effect at less than one percent probability level on participation. The odds ratio of the variable 0.060 shows that as the age of the respondent increases, there is a less likely probability of decreasing participation by a factor of 0.060 times, as age increases by one year and a similar finding, (Alema, 2008), studied that as age increases, participation of members in agricultural cooperative societies decreases.

### 6.2 Gender of the respondents

Analysis of the binary Logistic regression model showed that variable Gender (exp (B) values) =0.228 means that:-males are 0.228 times higher than females in participation. The odds ratio of the variable 1.256 shows that as the age of respondents increases, there is a less likely probability of decreasing participation by factor 1.256times increase by males.

## 6.3 The educational level of respondents

The variable has a positive association with Participation in cooperatives. The positive effect of this variable indicates the importance of education in influencing members to involve in decision-making and utilization of cooperative services. This result is consistent with ideas stated in Dubey, Singh, and Khera (1982) found that participation in decision-making remained mostly the same irrespective of their educational level. The odds ratio of 16.399 for educational level indicates that with the assumption of *ceteris paribus*, there is a more likely to increase members' participation by a factor of 16.399 times as educational level increases by one unit.

## 6.4 Farm size Respondents'

The odds ratio of 15.36 for land size shows that other variables remain unchanged, the odds ratio in favor of participation in agricultural cooperatives increases by a factor of 15.360 times as the farm size increases by one hectare. This result is also supported by the finding of Idrisa (2007), who concluded that the relationship between farm size and members' participation in agricultural cooperatives is significant at a 5% significance level.

## 6.5 The annual income of respondents

The variable was expected to have a positive sign and found the same with significance at less than 5% probability level and has a positive relation with participation in PMAC of the study area. The odds ratio of 20.743 for annual income indicates that with the assumption of *ceteris paribus*, there is a more likely to increase participation by a factor of 20.743 times as income level increases by one unit. This is in line with more recent evidence finding that reveal lack of income and economic empowerment can affect members' self-confidence and prevent them from obtaining leadership positions in producer organizations (Ouattara et al., 2010).

## 6.6 Duration of membership

The variable has positively and significantly related to a probability of increasing participation of women. As the duration of membership increases, members could have the right perception with a positive attitude towards their cooperatives. Several studies by Ojha and Shah (1990) stated that the duration of membership with cooperatives has a positive association with other indicators such as participation in cooperative management, nature, and extent of utilization of services of cooperatives. The odds ratio of 9.978 for the duration of membership implies that other things remain constant, there is a more likely increase in participation by a factor of 9.975 times as the duration of membership increases by one unit.

## 6.7 Access to cooperative credit

Other things being held constant, the odds ratio of 18.051 for access to cooperative credit with the assumption of *ceteris paribus*, indicates there is a more likely to increase participation by a factor of 18.051 times as the frequency of credit increases. This result is consistent with the study of (Narayana and Shongwe, 2010), which studied the determinants of female participation in agricultural cooperatives in Swaziland and reported as Cooperative

credit accessibility determines the likelihood of female participation in the agricultural cooperatives.

## 6.8 Access to cooperative dividend

The variable has a positive relation with participation and statistical significance at less than a 5% probability level. The odd ratio of 110.485 for dividends indicates that with the assumption of *ceteris paribus*, there is a more likely increase participation by a factor of 110.485 times as the number of cooperative dividends increases by one unit.

## 6.9 Respondents' Shareholding

The sign of this variable is consistent with that of prior expectations; it positively and significantly influenced participation. The positive sign showed that those cooperative members having more share participated than those having a small share. The odd ratio of 0.024 for the result shows that as the share of members of primary cooperatives increases, there is a more likely probability of increasing participation by 0.024 times as the share of cooperative member increase by one unit, other factors remain constant. Similarly, (Luk, 1996), found that having a large share number affects the participation of members in business enterprises more than a small share number. The Table below shows that 35.4 % (97) of the sample respondents were medium, 31.0% (86) of the total sample respondents were low participation, and 33.6% (92) of the sample respondents was high participation.

### Participation index categories of the members' (management)

SN	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (0.0 - 0.33)	86	31
2	Medium (0.34 - 0.67)	97	35.4
3	High (0.68 - 1.0)	92	33.6

### Source: own computation, 2021

Accordingly, the mean result of the participation index of the sample respondents was 0.54 (SD=0.225). This reveals that the average members' participation in management activities of the sample respondents was medium. Based on the result presented in Table-- shows that 32.7% (90) of the sample respondents were medium, 57.8% (159) of the total sample respondents were low participation, and 21% (26) of the sample respondents were high-level.

### Participation index categories of the members' (financial)

SN	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (0.0 - 0.33)	159	57.8
2	Medium (0.34 - 0.67)	90	32.7
3	High (0.68 - 1.0)	26	21

## Source: own computation, 2021

Accordingly, the mean result of the participation index of the sample respondents was 0.29 (SD=0.1155). Based on the result presented in the Table-- shows that 35.6 % (98) of the sample respondents was medium, 9.9 % (27) of the total sample respondents were low participation, and 51.5% (142) of the sample respondents was high level.

## Members' participation categories of the sample respondents (business)

SN	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (0.0 - 0.33)	27	9.9
2	Medium (0.34 - 0.67)	98	35.6
3	High (0.68 - 1.0)	142	51.5

## Source: own computation, 2021

Accordingly, the mean result of the participation index of the sample respondents was 0.74 (SD=0.3265). This reveals that the average members' participation in management activities of the sample respondents was medium. The high level of participation shows that the sample respondents' were well involved in the cooperative organization business activities. as owners and direct beneficiary. In addition, high participation widens the scope of cooperative business activities in fulfilling the members' interest to increase their participation cooperative business for performance improvement. The overall participation level of cooperative members' concerning all the cooperative activities was medium level.

## The overall Members' participation index of the sample respondents

SN	Categories	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. deviation
1	participation index-management	0.21	0.97	0.54	0.2255
2	participation index-business	0.33	0.99	0.74	0.3265
3	participation index- finance	0.23	0.87	0.29	0.1155
4	<b>Over all participation level -average</b>	<b>0,26</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>0.2225</b>

The mean result of the participation index of the sample respondents was 0.52 (SD=0.2225). This reveals that the overall average members' participation in all activities of cooperative was medium.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that,an average mean age of the respondents was 31.02 to show most members were at young age.The test of chi square i.e. 9.695 and sig.0.042 showsthere is association between age of members' and participation in agricultural cooperatives of the study area. It also revealed that, more than half of the cooperative members were males, loo consideration of female members.Cooperative members have low educational qualities. The

mean farm size of the sample respondents was averagely 1.888 he. (SD= 0.696). Averagely two hectares per members which considered being appropriate and having strong association with members' participation. Since the large the size of farm land the more the demand of inputs to buy and outputs produced to be sold and the more opportunities to participate in the cooperatives to be beneficial. .

The higher the amount of share of the members in their cooperatives, the higher the amount of money got from patron increases the accountability and responsibilities of the members which improves the members' participation level in the cooperatives, as well as the better income for household consumption and for infrastructure facilitation which motivates and initiates the members' to participate in every aspect of the cooperatives. Cooperative and alternative market access to be considered as good factor to affect the members' participation. Moreover, getting financial credit at multipurpose cooperatives is very difficult because different financial institution that facilitates credit services needs collateral and asks past trend of using credit services from different organizations. The researcher concluded that there is low attention for members' credit access. The members with better position in the cooperatives feeling more ownership and responsibility of their cooperatives. In addition, they have leadership role and better tendency to participate in the cooperatives affairs. Whereas, a large number of respondents were never participate in BOD and control committee of their cooperatives. This was mainly due to lack of information, lack of time, lack of sense of ownership, lack of trust in their cooperatives. Besides this, primary agricultural cooperatives have very low seat in BOD and Control committee positions for members; do not have special plan to increase participation of members (they neither motivate those members who were actively participate nor punish non-participant members ) depending up on their bylaws. Generally the participation of cooperative members' was not balanced. That means they were highly participate in business activities like farm input and output services, medium in management activities and low in financial activities. The overall participation level of cooperative members' is medium.

## 8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- Age was found as barriers of member's participation. Cooperatives should become youth sensitive, particularly in their representation and governance. Youth sections should be created within agricultural cooperatives, and gender inequalities should be addressed to ensure the active participation of young women.
- It is better for cooperatives to promote cooperative entrepreneurship for members' and youth as available, pro poor development strategy given that most new jobs are being created through small enterprises and self-employment. Joint membership of husband and wife must be made because in the absence of land ownership and other properties; such joint membership will boost the morale of members'
- Cooperatives have to facilitate conditions of credit to members through working with Agricultural Cooperative Unions, and Oromia Cooperative Banks. It is necessary for all primary cooperatives and their above-level cooperatives to create members' development funds to solve their financial problems in cooperatives. Cooperatives should provide financial and other supports to income-generating activities

- Cooperatives have to distribute dividends obtained from their marketing activities, from the Agricultural unions rather than simply putting them in their bank account or transferring it to pay for their debt/buying fixed assets, etc.
- In the study area, farm size was found a problem. Therefore, the government has to take Care of respondents to control large farm size through intervention by applying the land green card certification strategies.
- It is better if the government makes cooperative law to be supportive and suitably amended by enabling the admission of members in the existing cooperatives, and reservation of seats for members in management committees and other sub-committees.
- Research and evidence-based for best practices sharing must be conducted
- Have to check the work of different committees of cooperatives whether they are exercising cooperative principles, proclamations, bylaws, ethics, and good governance principles in their primary cooperatives.
- Enhance the leadership potential of youth members

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