DETERMINANTS OF SAVINGS AMONG RURAL WOMEN IN AGRO-ENTREPRENEURS: A STUDY OF IKWUANO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ABIA STATE, NIGERIA

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Keywords

Determinants, Savings, Rural, Women, Agroentrepreneurs

Abstract

Research Problem
Due to the under estimation of the substantial potentials of savings in the rural areas, there are little or no financial institution willing to provide services for small-scale farmers and women in the rural areas to save their meager income making majority of these women agrobased enterprises to result to traditional savings groups. In addition, despite the positive contributions of microenterprises to the growth and development of the society, agroenterprises especially women based often face challenges such as limited access to finance, weak managerial capacity, and market volatility, which can impede growth and sustainability.

Methods/Theory
Primary data was used in this study through the use of structured questionnaire and personal interview. Data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistical tools such as percentages, frequency distribution, and mean, ordinary least square regression, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The Life-Cycle Hypothesis provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how savings culture influences the financial stability of SMEs.

Results
The study showed that majority of the respondents were married, educated, young, and are well experience in agroenterprise activities. The study also showed that majority of the respondents haddifferent livelihoods sourcescapable of sustaining them and at the same time with substantial savings potentials. Also, personal savings was the major source of savings (56%) among the

respondents. In addition, the study showed that 91.1% of the respondents generated high savings. Furthermore, household size, value of assets, membership of cooperatives, operating costs and income were significant factors influencing savings among the respondents.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the respondents operated viable microenterprises with savings potentials and the income generated are mobilized mainly through their personal savings for future agroenterprise investment.

Key contribution to knowledge

This study provides empirical evidence that women based agroentrepreneursin rural area had financial surplus generated from personal savings that can be harness by financial institutions to increase their profit and stimulate the rural economies.

Recommendations

Based on findings, the following recommendations were made: That young, enterprising females should be encouraged and educated to save part of their income through effective sensitization. This measure would ensure that respondents can be financially independent after a period and can also prepare them in the event of a change. Respondents should be encouraged to join cooperatives in order to inculcate and sustain the culture of savings. Also, respondents should adopt viable cost-savingstrategies that reduce their operating costs. This measure would encourage greater financial resource utilization and savings.

Introduction

Even though micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) contribute significantly to employment creation, innovation, and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), they often face financial fragility due to inconsistent cash flows, limited access to credit, and inadequate financial management practices. In addition, mostmicroagroenterprisesthat reside in rural areas have limited resources, a restraining factor to their production output, income, savings, and investment. At the same time, the financial stability ofthese enterprises remains a critical determinant of economic growth and development in Nigeria. Therefore,one strategy identified as pivotal for enhancing financial stability and enterprise sustainability is by cultivating a savings culture among entrepreneurs and business owners (*Ahmed et al*., 2024; El-Yaqub*et al*., 2024).

Savings are very imperative for supporting and developing rural enterprises, improving well-being, insuring against times of shocks, and providing a buffer to help people cope in times of crisis (Rutherford, 2016; Zeller and Sharma, 2017). Moreover, the propensity to save among SME operators can influence their ability to make strategic investments, expand operations, and meet obligations such as salaries, taxes, and supplier payments, all of which are critical for

sustainable business performance (Muhammed*et al.,* 2025). Furthermore, saving money serves as a fundamental step towards wealth building and financial independence. By consistently setting aside a portion of their income and investing it wisely, individuals can accumulate assets and generate passive income streams

Households' savings play an important role in the economic development of both developed and developing nations, due to its significant influence on the circular flow of income in the economy (Iyoha, 2015). Therefore, cultivating a habit of saving money is paramount for achieving and maintaining financial stability. The sustenance of household savings increases the possibility of future investment both at the micro and macro levels in the economy. Directly, savings could be used for investment. Indirectly, savings indicate repayment ability, also increase credit rating, and as collateral in a credit market (Brata, 1999). Savings is both a risk management strategy and a determinant of the magnitude of investment. Investments are being made in agroenterprises help to improve the quality of rural assets and enhance productivity. The ability, willingness and opportunity of households to save and invest over time can therefore significantly influence the rate and sustainability of capital accumulation and economic growth in rural economies.

Several studies have suggested that a weak savings culture among SME operators often exacerbates financial instability, leading to business closures, job losses, and reduced contributions to national economic development (Adediran&Fadeyi, 2020). In contrast, enterprises with strong savings practices are better positioned to withstand financial turbulence, capitalise on growth opportunities, and maintain operational continuity (Ismail *et al.,* 2025). Hence, understanding the determinants of savings among microagroenterprises in Abia State, Nigeria is crucial for stakeholders and relevant enterprises operators / owners and financial institutions seeking to enhance their financial stability and foster a resilient entrepreneurial sector. Based on the deliberate role of microenterprises in Nigeria's economy and the challengesof financial instability, this study examines the contributing factors of savings among microenterprises. The findings of this research are expected to provide actionable insights to improve personal financial management practices and promote sustainable rural women micro-agroenterprises in Abia State, Nigeria.

Research Problem

Due to the under estimation of the substantial potentials of savings in the rural areas, there are little or no financial institution willing to provide services for small-scale farmers and women in the rural areas to save their meager income, to that effect these women result to traditional savings groups like the esusu (Balana and Oyeyemi, 2022). Farmers are also constrained to save as a result of fluctuations in price that affects the rate of output (Rui*et al*, 2024). Savings among rural households have become apparently impossible despite the efforts made by the government through giving of incentives, programs and policies aimed at increasing the productive potentials of the rural populace.

In addition, Women agroentrepreneurs in the state contribute significantly to household welfare, community development, and poverty reduction (Damor, 2025;Villaseca, 2021). However, their contribution is often constrained by poor financial empowerment. Many women depend on informal financing such as cooperatives, family support, and personal savings, which are often inadequate for business expansion and sustainability (Allen *et al*, 2019).

Therefore, the financial stability of these women-based micro agroenterprises remains a critical determinant of economic growth and development in Nigeria, given their significant contribution to employment creation, innovation, and GDP (Ogunleye and Adegbite, 2020). Despite their importance, women-based microagroenterprises in Nigeria often face financial fragility due to inconsistent cash flows, limited access to credit, and inadequate financial management practices (Ahmed *et al*., 2024; El-Yaqub*et al.*, 2024). To bridge these financial gaps, the following pertinent questions would be addressed in this study: i) What specific strategies can be implemented to encourage a savings culture among rural women agroentrepreneurs? ii) How do financial institutions currently support women microentrepreneurs in accessing credit, and what improvements can be made? And what are the primary barriers that prevent rural women from saving, despite having the potential financial surplus?

Research Objective

The broad objective of the study was to examine the determinants of savings among rural women in Ikwuano LGA of Abia State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are as follows;

i. determine the socioeconomic characteristics of women with savings in the study area, type of livelihood activities of women with savings and sources of savings available to rural women,

ii. assess the level of savings and income of rural women selected for the study along their livelihoods activities and determine the factors influencing savings among the respondents.

The study hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and amount of saved.

Conceptual literature

In Nigeria, micro and small enterprises constitute the backbone of the economy, providing employment opportunities, fostering innovation, and contributing substantially to GDP (El-Yaqub, *et al*, 2025; Ogunleye&Adegbite, 2020). Microagroenterprises are businesses characterised by a relatively modest scale of operations, a limited workforce, and moderate capital investment (Hamza *et al*., 2025). Generally, micro enterprise irrespective of the sector, has no single definition, but the common feature of these definitions is the micro level. In this study, micro agroenterprises are enterprises producing agricultural outputs and in other cases use agricultural inputs on a small scale for further productivity in attaining food security, employment, poverty reduction, and industrial vitalization.

Women play a crucial role in agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa, managing various enterprises from cropping to marketing and food processing (Palacios-Lopez, Christiaensen, and Kilic, 2015). They significantly contribute to non-production activities, including livestock management, and hold decision-making authority as household heads and farm owners. They represent 52% of the agricultural sector's population and oversee about 50% of the labor. Over 60% of employed women in Africa work in agriculture (Adebayo and Worth, 2024).

Savings represent that part of income that is not spent on consumption, but when applied to capital investment, output increases (Olusoji, 2003). Savings culture refers to the habitual and disciplined allocation of a portion of income or

revenue for future use, investment, or as a buffer against unforeseen financial challenges (Edward and Ogoke, 2024). A robust savings culture can provide internal funding, reduce reliance on external borrowing, and enhance resilience against economic shocks, thereby improving financial stability (Yunusa*et al.,* 2025; El-Yaqub*et al*., 2025; Bincy (2022). Moreover, the propensity to save among SME operators can influence their ability to make strategic investments, expand operations, and meet obligations such as salaries, taxes, and supplier payments, all of which are critical for sustainable business performance (Muhammed*et al*., 2025).

The mobilization of savings embraces policies designed to increase the savings propensity and also policies concerned with the rechanneling of savings to facilitate the desired allocation of investment (Edward and Ogoke, 2024). Capital formation through savings mobilization is an important factor in economic growth. Countries that can accumulate high level of capital tend to achieve faster rates of economic growth and development (Uremadu 2007). Savings provide developing countries like Nigeria with the much-needed capital for investment, which improves economic growth. An increase in savings leads to higher capital formation and production, which in turn creates employment and reduces the government's external borrowings. Savings mobilization has been regarded as a key growth performance indicator (Edward and Ogoke, 2024)

Theoretical Review

Life-Cycle Hypothesis (LCH)

The Life-Cycle Hypothesis (LCH), proposed by Modigliani and Brumberg (1954), posits that individuals plan their consumption and savings behaviour over their lifetime to smooth consumption, allocating resources efficiently between periods of income surplus and deficit. In the context of SMEs, this theory underscores the importance of a savings culture, as business owners who strategically save during profitable periods can build financial buffers to sustain operations during lean periods, thereby enhancing financial stability (Olaniyan and Ijaiya, 2018). The LCH is particularly relevant in the Nigerian SME sector, where external financing is often constrained, and businesses face volatile economic conditions. By adopting the principles of the LCH, SME operators can mitigate financial shocks, invest in growth opportunities, and maintain operational continuity, demonstrating a direct link between savings behaviour and business resilience (Nwachukwu and Eze, 2021). Hence, the Life-Cycle Hypothesis provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how savings culture influences the financial stability of SMEs

Empirical literature

Several studies have suggested that a weak savings culture among women agroenterprise operators often exacerbates financial instability, leading to business closures, job losses, and reduced contributions to national economic development (Adediran and Fadeyi, 2020). In contrast, enterprises with strong savings practices are better positioned to withstand financial turbulence, capitalise on growth opportunities, and maintain operational continuity (Ismail *et al.,* 2025).

Nwokoro (2023) examined the factors influencing savings culture among small businesses in Abuja Municipal Area Council, surveying 210 SMEs, and analysing the data using regression techniques. The study found that access to formal financial institutions, trust in banks, and awareness of financial literacy

programs significantly shaped SMEs' saving behaviours. Furthermore, SMEs that engaged in structured savings practices were more likely to obtain credit, enhancing their overall sustainability. The study emphasised that fostering trust in financial systems is essential for building a resilient SME sector in Abuja and beyond.

Okoye and Suleiman (2023) investigated savings practices and financial resilience among SMEs in Zaria, Kaduna State, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews involving 200 SME operators. The results indicated that SMEs with explicit savings routines, such as allocating a fixed daily percentage of revenue, were more likely to maintain liquidity, access emergency loans, and withstand external shocks. Qualitative insights further showed that reinforcing these routines through peer networks and trade guild discussions encouraged disciplined saving behaviour. The authors recommended that local associations in Gwagwalada collaborate with financial institutions to develop simple savings guidelines and peer accountability initiatives to support sustainable savings habits.

Ademola*et. al.* (2024) carried out a study on the drivers of savings behavior among women entrepreneurs in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study used a sample size of 240 respondents and data collected through structured questionnaires and interviews. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The results showed that socio-economic factors like age, education, income, and years of experience positively reinforce saving behavior, while larger household size negatively affects the ability to save. The authors also discovered that access to financial services by proximity to institutions of finance, availability of financial products and interest rates, financial literacy programs, and use of digital financial services are critical drivers of saving behavior.

Leto (2016) focused his study on the determinants of savings behavior among the working women household heads in the GamoGofa Zone. The sample used is 216 respondents, and the data used were cross-sectional. Tobin regression analysis was used for the analysis. Key findings showed that income, residence in urban areas, age, availability of financial institutions, level of education attainment, household size, marital status, and whether expenditures are planned or unplanned significantly affected savings behavior.

Bealu (2016), on the other hand, identified and examined various determinants of the saving behavior of rural households in Southern Ethiopia. He employed a Multiple Regression Model in which results showed that the age of the head of household, education, training, membership to cooperatives, farm and off-farm income, farm size, and livestock were significantly influencing rural households' savings positively. Expenditure, family size, and distance to savings associations were significant variables negatively influencing the saving behavior of rural households in the study area.

Obayelu (2013) investigated the saving rate and its determinants in rural Kwara State of Nigeria. A total of 120 households' data were collected through a multi-stage sampling procedure. Using the Tobit regression model, the results showed that age, farming experience, and diversification of non-farming activities positively affect rural saving rates.

A study carried out by Peace (2021) examined the determinants of saving behavior among rural households in Ikwuano L.G.A. of Abia state. A total of 80 respondents were randomly selected for the study using a multistage random technique. Data used in this

study were analysed using descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and simple correlation analysis. Results obtainedshow thatthe majority of the respondents were male, educated, married, with a mean household size of 6, and had farming as their major occupation. The factors that were statistically significant in influencing household savings are total income, age, farming experience, level of education, and value of assets. Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between the amounts of money borrowed from financial institutions and their savings deposits. Key constraints to savings included low awareness of mobilization, inadequate rural integration, conservatism, high interest rates, and poor literacy.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Ikwuano LGA of Abia State, Ikwuano is located between latitudes 5.433^0N and longitude 7.567^0E, in the State. According to 2022 projection, Ikwuano has a population of 200,800 people. Ikwuano LGA was created out of the defunct IkwuanoUmuahia LGA on the 7th of August 1991 and has its headquarters at IsialaOboro. Ikwuano LGA is made up of 4 major clans with 51 autonomous communities. Thus,Oboro -18, AriamUsaka - 13, Ibere -11 and Oloko- 9, they are similar in all ramifications, both in economic potentials and social systems. The major occupation of the people is farming which is about 70% of the entire population while petty trading, teaching and transport business occupy the minor sector. The study adopted a descriptive research survey design in order to achieve comprehensive viability of the study. The population include the women who are rural dwellers in theIkwuano LGA of Abia State. Multistage random sampling was used in the study. 5 Autonomous Communities were selected randomly from the existing communities in the LGA. Three villages were selected randomly from each of the 5 Autonomous communities, which gave a total of fifteen villages for the study. Finally, 3 respondents were chosen randomly from each of the fifteen villages, giving a total sample size of 45 respondents. Primary data was used in this study, and data was collected through personal interviews as well as structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed using the percentages, frequency distributions, means, Regression analysis, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) F-statistic. The implicit form of the Regression model is specific as follows

$Y = F(X_1, X_2, X_3 X_4, X_5, X_6, X_7)$

Where the following are defined

Y = Amount of savings (₦)

X_1 = Age (years)

X_2 = Income (₦/annum)

X_3 = Level of education (Number of years of schooling)

X_4 = Household size (Number of people living under the same roof)

X_5 = Operating costs (₦/annum)

X_6 = Membership of cooperatives

X_7 = Value of assets (Naira)

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) F-statistic Formula is stated below:

$$F = \frac{\sum \hat{y}2/(N-K)}{\sum_e 2/(K-1)}$$

Where:

$\sum y2$= sum of the squared deviation of y2

$\sum \hat{y}2$ = sum of square deviation explained by all the regression together

$\sum_e 2$= sum of residual deviation

N-K and K −1 = degree of freedom for $\sum \hat{y}2$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic characteristics of rural women

Socio-economic characteristics of rural women agro-entrepreneurs is presented in Table 1

Age	Frequency	Percent	Mean
21-30	1	2.2	
31-40	10	22.2	
41-50	28	62.2	
51-60	5	11.2	
61-70	1	2.2	
Total	**45**	**100**	**43.1**
Education			
No formal education	8	17.8	
Primary education	6	13.3	
Secondary education	10	22.2	
Tertiary	21	46.7	
Total	**45**	**100**	
Marital Status			
Single	15	33.3	
Married	30	66.7	
Total	**45**	**100**	
Householdsize			
1-4	9	20	
5-8	19	42.2	
9-12	15	33.4	
13-16	2	4.4	
Total	**45**	**100**	**7.5**
Experience			
1-10	13	30.3	
11-20	20	46.6	
21-30	5	11.7	
31-40	4	9.3	
41-50	1	2.3	
Total	**45**	**100**	**17.0**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 shows that majority (62.2%) of the respondents were between the age group of 41-50 years, while 22.2% of the respondents were between the age group of 31-40 years. In addition, the mean age of the respondents was 43.1. This means that majority of the respondents were within their prime age and could carry out farming activities with less difficulty.

Table 1 further shows that majority (82.2%) of the respondents have undergone one form of formal education or the other, with only 17.8% of the respondent having no formal education. This goes to say that majority of the respondent

are educated. Being educated could mean greater level of mental exposure and skills in handling and exploring viable savings options. In addition, know when to deplore cost saving strategies that will lead to greater income and savings.

The Table shows that 33.3% and 66.7% of the respondents were single and married respectively. This means that majority of the respondents were married. Being married could mean greater ability to gather/organize their household's energies for agricultural production and reduce cost of production. Consequently, increasing the chance of saving the greater part of the farm income.

Table 1 shows that the majority (42.2%) of the respondents had a household size bracket of between 5-8 members, while 33.4% of the respondents had a household size bracket of between 9-12 members, 20% and 4.4% of the respondents had household size brackets of between 1-4 and 13-16 members, respectively. In addition, the mean house size of the respondents was about 8 family members. This goes to say that the majority of the respondents have relatively large family sizes. Large family size could mean abundant, cheap, and available family labour.

The table shows that about 77% of the respondents have business experience of between 1 and 20 years. In addition, the mean business experience was 17 years. This goes to say that the majority of the respondents are well-experienced and equipped with the requisite knowledge of business operations.

Livelihood activities of respondents

Livelihood of respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents based on livelihood activities

Livelihood	Frequency	%	Ranking
Goat	13	27.3	7th
Poultry	16	34.0	5th
Cassava	38	80.8	1st
Yam	15	31.6	6th
Vegetable	37	78.4	2nd
Palm fruits	5	10.5	8th
Piggery	19	40.2	4th
Melon crops	22	46.6	3rd

Source: Field survey, 2018 Note: Multiple Responses Recorded

Table 2 shows the different livelihoods of the respondents selected for study. The table shows that 80.8% of the respondents were involved in cassava enterprise. While 78.4% and 46.6% were involved in vegetable and melon enterprises, respectively. This means that the majority of the respondents had cassava enterprise as their major source of livelihood.

Source of savings available to respondents

Sources of savings available to respondents is presented in Table 3

Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on Source of savings available to respondents

Sources of savings	Frequency	Percentage
Personal	23	56.1
Esusu	12	29.3
Cooperative/group association	6	14.6
Total	41	100

Source: Field survey, 2018. Note: Multiple Responses Recorded

Table 3 shows that 56.1%, 29.3%, and 14.6% of the respondents had personal, Esusu, and Women Cooperative Societies as their sources of savings. This means that the majority of the respondents had personal savings as their major source of savings. The high source of personal savings could be due to ease of withdrawal, interest accrual, and avoiding stringent procedures, among others.

Level of savings among the respondents

Level of savings among the respondents is presented in Table 4

Table 4: Distribution of respondents based on Level of savings

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
High	41	91.1
Low	4	8.9
Total	45	100

Source: Field survey, 2018.

Table 4 shows that 91.1% of the respondents had access to savings. This means that the majority of the respondents had access to savings. The high incidence of access to savings could be due to a sound saving culture, freedom, and benefits associated with savings, such as ease of withdrawal and financial independence.

Level of income of rural women

Level of income of rural women selected for study along their livelihoods activities is presented in Table 5

Table 5: Distribution of respondents based on income generation along their livelihoods activities

	Goat		Poultry		Cassava		Yam		Vegetable		Palm fruits		Piggery		Melon	
Income ₦	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**
1000-99999	12	92.3	13	81.25	37	97.36	14	93.33	34	91.89	5	100	18	94.73	22	100
100000-199999	-	-	3	18.75	-	-	1	6.66	2	5.4	-	-	1	5.26	-	
200000-299999	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	
300000-399999	1	7.69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
400000-499999	-	-	-	-	1	2.63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	13	100	16	100	38	100	15	100	37	100	5	100	19	100	22	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 5 shows that 92.3%, 81.25%, 97.36%, 93.33%, 91.89%, 100%, 94.73 and 100% of the respondents were involved in Goat, poultry, cassava, yam, vegetable, palm fruits, piggery and melon respectively had income ranging between N1000.00 – N99,999.00. This means that majority of the respondents with different livelihood sources were all small-scale farmers with savings potentials.

Factors influencing savings among respondents

Factors influencing savings among respondents is presented in Table 6

Table 6: Distribution of respondents based on factors influencing savings among respondents

Variable	Linear+	Exponential	Semi log	Double log
Constant	233.705	7.180	-22783.167	2.038
	(0.092)	(12.665)***	(-2.528)**	(1.301)
Age	22.961	0.006	535.860	0.650
	(0.614)	(2.000)**	(2.966)***	(3.110)***
Education	5.740	-0.015	-524.317	0.513
	(0.053)	(-0.624)	(-0.378)	(2.129)**
Household size	116.424	0.014	-370.945	-0.004
	(3.213)***	(0.387)	(-0.510)	(-0.030)
Value of Assets	3.290	0.001	3455.022	0.634
	(5.269)***	(3.594)***	(2.938)***	(3.102)***
Cooperative	624.697	0.432	903.344	0.119
	(2.179)**	(2.805)***	(1.946)**	(0.795)
Operating cost	-9.971	0.002	432.199	0.429
	(-1.709)*	(1.800)**	(0.361)	(3.972)***
Income	0.009	2.12E-007	958.162	0.058
	(2.250)*	(0.369)	(2.139)**	(0.750)
R^2	0.755	0.713	0.632	0.739
R^{-2}	0.709	0.659	0.562	0.690
F-ratio	16.318***	13.142***	9.081***	15.000***

Source: Field survey, 2018.Note:+ = Lead equation, Figures in parentheses are T values

*** Significant at 1% ,** Significant at 5%,*Significant at 10%.

Linear functional form was chosen as the lead equation base on the value of R^2 (coefficient of multiple determination), F-ratio and the conformity of regression coefficients with apriori expectations. The value of R^2 (0.755) means that 75.5% of the total variation observed in the dependent variable (savings) was accounted for by the independent variables included in the model. The value of F-ratio value of 16.318 was statistically significant at 1% and signifies that the model has a high good of fit.

Household size was significant at 1% and positively related to savings. This means that as the household size increased, the amount saved also increased. Increased household size could mean abundant source of cheap family labour and source of reliable information that can promote/increase income generation. The more

the availability of abundant source of cheap family labour and reliable source of information that can increase income generation especially in this age of ICT, the more the savings.

Value of assets was significant at 1% and positively related to savings. This means that as assets increased, savings also increased. Assets owned by the respondents could mean an additional source of reliable and can be liquidated to generate revenue. The more assets could be liquidated to generate revenue, the more the savings.

Membership of cooperatives was significant at 5% and positively related to savings. This means that as membership of the cooperative increased, savings also increased. Membership of cooperative could afford respondents access to information/knowledge that can enhance their capacity to generate more income. The more their access to information/knowledge that enhance their capacity to generate income the more the savings.

Operating cost was significant at 10% and was negatively related to savings. This means that as operating costs increased, savings decreased, vice versa. Increased operating costs could mean a huge financial burden on the respondents. The greater the financial burden, the less the savings.

Income was significant at 5% and positively related to savings. This means that as income increased, savings also increased. Increased income could mean the ease of venturing into additional investment, of which investment in savings could be one of them.

Test of Hypothesis

This hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic characteristics and amount of savings. To achieve this, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics was used in analyzing the hypothesis and the result is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Significant relationship between socio-economic characteristics and amount of savings.

Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean squares	F cal	F tab
Regression	5.7E + 008	7	81292708.276	16.318	2.23
Residual	1.8E + 008	37	4981762.497		
Total	7.5E + 008	44			

Source: Field survey, 2018

Decision Rule; If F Cal> F Tab, reject the H_0 and accept the H_a otherwise accept the H_0.

Table above shows that F cal (16.318) was greater than F tab (2.23). So reject the H_0 and accept the hypothesis. So there is a significant difference between socio-economic characteristics and amount of savings. Finally, the test of the hypothesis on savings showed that there is a significant difference between socioeconomic characteristics and the amount saved.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the respondents generated income from their agroenterprisesand consequently mobilizedthese savings mainly through their personal savings, which could have been possible due to the nurturing of a savings culture. This corroborates the Life-Cycle Hypothesis, which provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how savings culture influences the financial stability and investment tendencies of enterprises.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study made the following recommendations: that young, enterprising females should be encouraged to save part of their income through effective awareness by relevant rural financial intermediaries and cooperatives. Furthermore, in order to have sustainable savings, respondents should be encouraged to take up crops (like cassava) that have the propensity of being intercropping /grown with other crops. This measure would ensure effective growth and good yield, which will in turn command good market value (Sales) and savings. More so, respondents should make use of their years of experience in farming to solvechallenges faced in the diversification of crops. This will help reduce crop losses and increase income. Finally, respondents should adopt viable strategies that can reduce their operating costs. This measure would make for greater financial resource utilization and savings.

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