

**Cooperative Members' Perceptions of Cooperative Education in Tanzania's Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies: Insights from Sengerema and Ukerewe Districts.**

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**Abstract**

Cooperative education plays a crucial role in the development of Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies (AMCOS). Despite its significance, recent years have witnessed challenges in the cooperative sector being associated with the provision of education. However, the existing research has predominantly focused on the absence of cooperative education and poor participation among members, neglecting such members' perceptions towards education provided. As such, this study examines perceptions of AMCOS members regarding cooperative education. More specifically, the study determines members' perceptions of the cooperative education setup, implementation, and alignment of such cooperative education to cooperative principles. Employing purposive sampling technique, the study gathered data from 64 participants through focus group discussions and interviews. Qualitative methods were utilized for data analysis. Results indicated that AMCOS members harbor negative perceptions regarding the adequacy, approach, teaching methodology, target audience, and evaluation of cooperative education. Members reported dissatisfaction due to the lack of practical applicability, insufficient training duration, and perceived irrelevance of the content. The study concludes that the existing cooperative education programs are unfavorably perceived by members. Based on the findings, it is suggested that reforms in cooperative education delivery be implemented, advocating for inclusivity across all community groups. Additionally, facilitators ought to optimize the allocated time to ensure members derive maximum benefit from training aligned with educational objectives. Furthermore, agricultural and cooperative officers should frequently visit AMCOS to educate members on cooperative education matters. These reforms aim to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of AMCOS by fostering a positive perception and engagement among their members.

**Keywords:** Cooperative education; Cooperative agriculture; Agricultural development; Cooperative societies; Educational objectives