

Does the heterogeneity of project implementers affect the program participation of beneficiaries?:

Evidence from rural Cambodia *

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Abstract

Using the dataset collected for assessment of a post-harvest technology project in rural Cambodia, we focused on the heterogeneous preferences of project implementers, often overlooked in the literature on the program evaluation studies. Our study focuses on the “implementer effect” on program participation for the treated farmers. We show that heterogeneous program participation of ordinary farmers across the treated villages could be induced due to heterogeneity in the characteristics of project staff. In particular, we show the altruism of project staff, measured by the dictator game, consistently increases participation and the number of participations in the training sessions of beneficiaries. This type of heterogeneity in project staffs’ preferences across treatment sites could be a source of treatment heterogeneity for a program conducted at a certain cluster level. While few studies have focused on heterogeneity of the program implementers, our empirical results indicate the preference of implementers could be a source of treatment heterogeneity and imply the importance of how an actual project is implemented.

JEL code: O19, O22, D03, D64

Keywords: technology adoption, project implementer, altruism, field experiment

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