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Socio-economic Barriers in the Adoption of Holistic Management as a Way of Combating Land Degradation

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Abstract

The impact of land degradation is challenging to smallholder farmers in developing countries such as Zimbabwe due to anthropogenic, natural, and environmental factors. Technologies addressing land degradation issues need to be adopted to mitigate or reverse the land degradation process. This study sought to extend the knowledge of adoption behaviour of smallholder farmers and investigates factors affecting the adoption of Holistic land and livestock management practices – rotational grazing and feeding livestock on land. For this research a total of 126 smallholder farmers in Chikukwa community were interviewed in a quantitative survey using structured questionnaire. The data analysis methods used include descriptive statistics, chi square test and logistic regression. The study results showed that the farmers face problems with water erosion and low soil nutrients. The results of the logistic regressions on factors affecting adoption of feeding livestock on farmland showed that high importance of government information and internet for farmer influences the adoption of the practice positively. The results of the logistic regression on factors affecting adoption of rotational grazing revealed that household head gender plays an important role in adoption of the practice, importance of print media as a source of information on agricultural practices and trainings on holistic land and livestock management practices have a critical role to play in farmer adoption of sustainable practices. The results show that an information network system based on the NGOs trainings, institutional actors (government) information provision and appropriate use of printed media and internet for providing information of Holistic land and livestock management practices has the potential to support the diffusion of the practices among smallholder farmers.

Keywords: Barriers, factors, holistic management, land degradation, livestock management