

Research Article

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Impacts of Improved Seed Maize Technology Adoption on Productivity and Technical Efficiency in Northern Ghana

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Abstract: Improved seed is one of the crucial ingredients for promoting agricultural productivity, farmers' livelihood, and global food security. The present study uses an endogenous treatment regression model (ETRM) to evaluate the impacts of improved seed maize technology (ISMT) adoption on technical efficiency and productivity using data from maize farmers in northern Ghana. The findings show that ISMT adoption impacts positively on technical efficiency. Adoption of ISMT enhanced technical efficiency by 16.1% and increased maize productivity by 33.8%. The study recommends dissemination of improved maize seeds to farmers and other interventions such as provision of fertilizer to enhance farmers' technical efficiency and productivity.

Keywords: adoption; stochastic frontier analysis; technical efficiency; endogenous treatment-regression model; Tolon District.

JEL Classification: C21; D24; Q12

1 Introduction

Improved technology adoption is critical for agricultural productivity and livelihoods of small-scale farmers in developing countries. Promoting agricultural productivity and global food security requires improved seeds (Almekinders et al., 2019). Improved seeds are high-yielding, disease-resistant and drought-tolerant, which also respond well to inorganic fertilizer (Lee, 2020; Simtowe et al., 2019), whereas traditional seeds tend to have lower yields but are more adaptable to the local environment (Anang, 2019). Several efforts have been made toward crop varietal improvements in many less-developed countries, including Ghana in recent times (Anang, 2019; Danso-Abbeam et al., 2017; Ogada et al., 2014) but the rates of adoption have been below expectations (Spielman and Smale, 2017). Studies on adoption of modern and high-yielding seeds in sub-Saharan Africa exist in the literature (Eriksson et al., 2018; Walker and Alwang, 2015; Alene et al., 2009; Krishna and Quarm, 2008). Some of the studies argue that adoption of improved seed varieties remains low particularly among smallholder producers (Alene et al., 2009; Krishna and Quarm, 2008), and that even where improved seeds are perceived to be available, affordable, and profitable, most smallholder farmers find it difficult to invest in these technologies (Hoogendoorn et al., 2018). Growing body of literature on the adoption of agricultural technology has therefore suggested the rethinking of the way improved seed technology is generated, designed and disseminated to farmers, while finding ways to improve demand for and uptake of improved seed technologies by the

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