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Determinants of Participation Decision in Cassava Marketing by Smallholder Farmers in Taita-Taveta and Kilifi Counties, Kenya

Abstract

Cassava is an important food crop with high production potential in different agroecological zones across the world. Cassava is also a drought tolerant crop performing well in arid and semi-arid areas. Cassava has a great potential as both a food security and industrial crop. In addition, as a drought tolerant crop, it fits very well as a climate smart crop in the face of climate change. However, the cassava industry and value chain in Kenya is still underdeveloped and therefore there are many cassava marketing opportunities that are yet to be exploited. This study analyses factors that influence smallholder farmers' decision to participate in cassava marketing in Taita-Taveta and Kilifi Counties in Kenya. Data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires from a sample of 250 smallholder cassava farmers. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the socio-economic characteristics of respondents while a binary Probit model was used to analyse the socio-economic factors that influence farmers' participation decision in cassava marketing. The results of the binary Probit model show that, sex of the head of a household, access to extension services, price of cassava products and quantity harvested had a positive and significant influence on market participation decision while years of schooling, household size and farm size had a negative and significant influence on the market participation decision. Therefore, based on the findings, the study recommended policy interventions targeting organization and coordination of the cassava marketing system and provision of appropriate incentives to farmers to enhance market participation.

Keywords: cassava, farmers, Kenya, marketing, participation decision