

Abstract

Food security is multifarious and an issue of concern to many developing countries. This study sought to analyze the economic determinants to household food security in Kyangwithya West location of Kitui County. Cross sectional descriptive research design was utilized. The study was guided by the cultural ecological theory propounded by Julian Steward (1955). Data were collected from 344 households, Key informants and focused group discussants. Data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics and were presented using tables and verbatim narratives. The results of the study revealed that a majority of households (73%) were food insecure. The results of the descriptive statistics indicated that the main sources of income for a majority of respondents (65.4%) were farming, nonfarm activities (26.4) and formal employment (8.2). Households engaged in formal employment although few were the most food secure (51%), followed by farming (28%) while the least food secure category depended on nonfarm activities (26%) for their income. Findings demonstrate that majority of households (89%) had access to market but were also the least food secure (27%) compared to few households (11%) that had no access to markets but were more food secure (29%). Land sizes were assessed and majority of the respondents (48%) had up to 2 acres of land and were the least (25%) food secure. Households with above 4 acres although few (21%) were the most food secure (32%) followed by households that owned 2.1-4 acres (28%). These findings demonstrate that the source of income and farm size enhances household food security. More studies need to be done to establish why market access did not enhance household food security contrary to the findings of other studies.