

Abstract

The study was conducted to elucidate the influence of socio-economic factors on household postharvest cereal loss in Wikililye location of Kitui County. This cross sectional study was conducted on 343 households, who were selected using population proportional to size sampling method. To collect quantitative data, a questionnaire was administered through face-to-face interviews. Key informants and focused group discussants were purposively sampled to collect qualitative data. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and was presented using tables and verbatim narrations. The results of the study revealed that a majority of households in Wikililye location experienced postharvest cereal loss. Based on the results, majority of the households (63%) were found to experience cereal loss while 37% did not. The results of the descriptive statistics indicated that gender, age, level of education, marketing of cereals and alternative source of income have an influence on household postharvest cereal loss. Female headed households; younger household heads below 39 years; household heads with secondary and tertiary and above education though very few; and household heads who did not market their cereals experienced reduced postharvest loss. Socio economic factors therefore influence household postharvest cereal loss. Educational level of most household heads was low and is therefore the recommendation of this study to provide trainings and avail the needed resources for households in order to equip in postharvest cereal loss prevention strategies. More studies also seem to be essential in order to provide practical solutions to reduce postharvest cereal loss and curb the severity of food insecurity in Wikililye location.