

Abstract

Marketing-channel choice is an important component of agricultural commercialization because alternative channels differ in price incentives, transaction costs, market accessibility, buyer reliability and volume requirements. This study examined the factors influencing Moringa marketing-channel choice among valuechain actors in Kibwezi East and West Sub-Counties of Makueni County, Kenya. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires from 650 Moringa value-chain actors comprising producers, middlemen or brokers, retailers, wholesalers, processors and consumers. Descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression were used to analyse the determinants of marketing-channel choice. Eight explanatory variables were included in the final model: price received, distance to market, quantity marketed, trust in the buyer, transport accessibility, education level, farming experience and land allocated to Moringa. The logistic regression model was statistically significant (Model $\chi^2 = 124.83$, $p < 0.001$), with a Cox and Snell R^2 of 0.39 and Nagelkerke R^2 of 0.47. The model correctly classified 76.9% of observations, while the Hosmer–Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test was non-significant ($p = 0.624$), indicating an adequate model fit. Price received was positively associated with marketing-channel choice ($\beta = 0.021$, OR = 1.021, $p < 0.001$), while distance to market had a negative association ($\beta = -0.087$, OR = 0.917, $p < 0.001$). Quantity marketed ($\beta = 0.014$, OR = 1.014, $p < 0.001$), trust in buyers ($\beta = 0.563$, OR = 1.756, $p < 0.001$), transport accessibility ($\beta = 0.431$, OR = 1.539, $p < 0.001$), and land allocated to Moringa ($\beta = 0.392$, OR = 1.480, $p = 0.001$) were also positively associated with channel choice. Education and farming experience were not statistically significant. The findings demonstrate that Moringa marketing-channel decisions are shaped primarily by economic incentives, transaction costs, market accessibility, relational governance and production capacity rather than formal education or farming experience. Strengthening market information systems, transport infrastructure, aggregation arrangements, producer–buyer relationships and production capacity could expand smallholder access to more attractive and reliable Moringa marketing channels in semi-arid Kenya.