

**IMPACT OF COLLECTIVE MARKETING PARTICIPATION ON
SMALLHOLDER AVOCADO FARMERS' INCOME IN MURANG'A
COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented to any other University for the award of any degree


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We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision and has been submitted with our approval as University supervisors

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ABSTRACT

In developing countries, horticultural production is one of the major sectors that enable smallholders to feed their families, and generate incomes. Avocado is a major crop in Murang'a county but its potential to generate incomes is limited by challenges associated with production and marketing. The study had three objectives 1. To analyze smallholder avocado farmers and their perception regarding collective marketing in Kigumo Sub-County 2. To assess socio-economic factors influencing collective marketing participation by smallholder avocado farmers in Kigumo Sub-County 3. To determine the impact of collective marketing participation on income among smallholder avocado farmers in Kigumo Sub-County. To collect data from a random sample of 300 households, a questionnaire was used. Data collected was mainly on socio-economic characteristics of farmers, perceptions of farmers using a Likert scale among the participants and non-participants of collective marketing. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS v.20 and STATA v.15 Software. The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. A binary logistic regression model was used to analyze socio-economic factors influencing collective marketing participation, while impact of collective marketing participation on income was analyzed using propensity score matching. Results showed that some characteristics of farmers that participated in collective marketing were different from those who did not participate in collective marketing. This included land allocated to avocado trees, accessibility of roads to the market, off-farm income, avocado harvested in 2020, price of avocado fruits, avocado market information availability, distance to the regular avocado market and collection center, active household member in avocado farming activities, cattle ownership, motorbike as means of avocado transportation, chicken and pigs 'ownership, income from avocado selling. In regard to perception, results showed an average of 71.77% of participants and 60.9% of non-participants strongly agreed that collective marketing participation increases price bargaining power, avocado fruits sold and income of avocado farmers. Results from the binary logistic regression model showed that Land under avocado trees, accessibility of roads to the market, off-farm income, avocado harvested in 2019, avocado market information availability positively influenced participation in avocado collective marketing, whereas household head avocado farming experience, active household member in avocado farming activities, labor availability, avocado harvested in 2018, government support in fertilizer negatively influenced participation in collective marketing. The amount of avocado produced showed a significant difference in year 2020 where participants produced 1251, 3kilograms and 889.7kilograms for non-participants, the average prices per piece of avocado fruit was 7.5Ksh for participants and 5Ksh for their counterparts. The PSM results of impact analysis showed that collective marketing participation had a positive and significant impact on income of smallholder avocado farmers. Participation in collective marketing increased incomes by an average of 41.2 percent during the three consecutive years considered in this study. The findings of this study recommends that farmers increase land under avocado and increase participation in collective marketing of the produce. This will increase their incomes. Policy makers to improve infrastructure to the markets and empower farmers to participate in collective marketing.