Determinants of Baobab Value Addition in Kenya

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Abstract

Baobab processing plays an important role in alleviating poverty and food insecurity especially in the arid and semiarid areas, where food production is limited by climatic conditions. This paper investigates the factors influencing processor's choice of product to process. The study used 304 baobab processors selected in Kitui, Makueni and Mombasa, Kilifi and Nairobi counties of Kenya. Snowball sampling method was used to select the processors. Structured questionnaires were used for data collection. Cluster analysis was employed to characterise baobab processors while logit model was adopted to determine the factors influencing processor's choice of product to process. Cluster analysis results, showed three clusters which constitute different typologies of baobab processors. Typology 1was composed of high quantity processors and represented 5 % of the sample. Typology 2 was made of average quantity processors and represented 15 % of the sample while typology 3 consisted of low quantity processors and represented 80 % of the sample size. The logit model results revealed that education level($p < 0.1$), marital status($p < 0.1$), business location ($p < 0.1$), awareness level ($p < 0.01$) and number of trees owned ($p < 0.05$) had a negative significant influence on candies as choice of product to process. While years of processing ($p < 0.05$) and credit access (p<.01) significantly favoured candies as the choice of product to process. The findings offer useful policy insights on baobab processing which will help in improving baobab value addition in Kenya. The study proposes more research on baobab to increase more products, people to be sensitized on importance of baobab, processors to be trained on additional baobab products and safe baobab processing. Similarly, encouraging formation of processor group will boost baobab processing. Understanding factors influencing choice of baobab product to process is important in boosting demand and baobab market systems.

Keywords: Baobab, candy, Kenya, logit, processing, typologies

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