

ABSTRACT

In Sub-Saharan Africa, agricultural commercialization is a major factor in household food diversification and household income. To move to agricultural transformation, Rwanda has focused on shifting from subsistence-based farming to market-oriented agriculture. Various studies have been conducted on agricultural commercialization, however, women's role in the commercialization of agriculture has received little attention and none of the studies have associated it with women's empowerment in agriculture. In Rwanda, women are principal players in agriculture and food security, therefore, it is important to understand the influence of their empowerment in agriculture on its commercialization. To investigate the relationship between women's empowerment in agriculture and agricultural commercialization, the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) was used to measure women's empowerment in agriculture. A sample size of 252 households from Musanze and Burera districts in the Northern Province of Rwanda was used. It was obtained using the multistage and random sampling techniques. To analyze data, a fractional regression model was used. The results revealed that farm commercialization in Rwanda was positively and significantly influenced by WEAI score, farm size and the prices of maize, potatoes and beans. On the other hand, the index has a negative relationship with access to extension services. It is recommended that the government should strengthen policies of empowering women in agriculture.