

**INFLUENCE OF FARM INPUTS, PRODUCER CHARACTERISTICS,  
INSTITUTIONAL AND MARKETING FACTORS ON HONEY  
PRODUCTION IN THARAKA SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Masters of Science in  
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## DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for an award in diploma or conferment of a degree in this or any other University.

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### Recommendation

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my lovely parents Mr. Ndia Watia Kiganu and Mrs. Margaret Kanyua Simon.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

Beekeeping, vital for honey, beeswax, and crop pollination, contributes to socioeconomic development worldwide. In Kenya, it adds 2% to GDP, supports employment, poverty reduction, and food security. In 2021, Kenya produced 17,801 tons of honey, far below its 100,000-ton potential. Some of the factors contributing toward the sub-optimal production of honey in Kenya have not been fully investigated especially in Tharaka Nithi County, which is among the main producers of honey in the country. Therefore, the aim of the study was to analyze farm inputs, farmer characteristics, institutional and marketing factors that influence honey production in Tharaka South Sub County in Tharaka Nithi County. The study employed a descriptive survey design and targeted a population of 4,160 honey producers. The theory of production was applied in this research. The theory helped determine the correlation between various aspects and the output of honey in Tharaka South Sub County. Cluster sampling method was employed. The study adopted a simple random technique to sample participants in the study area. A sample size of 352 bee producer were selected randomly. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data on farm inputs, producer characteristics, institutional and marketing factors influencing honey production. The pretesting of the questionnaire involving 35 honey producers was conducted in Gatunga Ward in Tharaka North Sub County. The validity of the data collected was done with the aid of experts from the Ministry of Livestock and academic supervisors. Data reliability was performed using the Cronbach Alpha test and a coefficient of 0.730 was found which was greater than 0.700 hence the instrument was reliable for use in the research. Data was analyzed by means of SPSS version 25. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics, multiple linear regression and Cobb-douglas stochastic frontier model. The findings indicated that production levels amongst honey producers ranged from 10 to 896 kilograms, with a mean production of 307 kilograms annually. Multiple linear regression model was employed to identify the farm inputs, producer features, institutional and marketing factors that influence honey production. The findings were that honey production will increase by increasing producers land size and number of beehives. Further, increasing the distance to shrub land and usage of supplement feed will reduce honey production. Education level of the decision maker and farming experience affects honey production negatively. It was found that age, gender of decision maker and marital status had positive effects on honey production. It was also noted that education level of the household head and farming experience negatively influence on honey production. Market distance, credit access, access to market information and storage of honey also influenced production of honey. The study recommends that for improvement in honey production, decrease in producers' distance to shrub land need to be reduced and land size increased. In addition, ensure establishment of honey markets in honey producing areas to reduce distance traveled by the bee producers while looking for better market prices and also make storage facilities available for the bee producers. The study concludes that producers should enhance usage of modern honey production technologies, government to promote policies on providing capacity building for producers and organizations and provision of market linkages through the formation of cooperatives.

