THE ROLE OF COMMERCIAL MOTORCYCLES IN THE RURAL ECONOMY:
A CASE STUDY OF LAI KIPA EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA.

BY

FREDRICK MWANGI KAREMA
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the contribution of commercial motorcycles in promoting agriculture in Laikipia East Sub-County. Primary data was obtained from questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews. The sample size was established to be 61 out of the target population of 153. The objectives of the study were: (i) To determine the contribution of commercial motorcycles in promoting agriculture in Laikipia East Sub-County; (ii) To examine the contribution of commercial motorcycles in poverty alleviation in Laikipia East Sub-County; and (iii) To investigate the spatial distribution patterns of commercial motorcycles in Laikipia East Sub-County. Data was analysed using Chi-square test, Spearman’s Rank Correlation, Percentages, pie-charts and bar-charts techniques. The first hypothesis of the study was tested by Chi-square ($\chi^2$) test and second hypothesis was tested using Spearman’s Rank Correlation coefficient.

The first hypothesis was: (i) there is no significant difference between promotion of agriculture and commercial motorcycles’ trips in Laikipia East Sub-County. Major findings were: There was a statistical significance in the difference between promotion of agriculture and commercial motorcycles’ trips in Laikipia East Sub-County. Since the calculated value of $\chi^2$ was greater than the critical $\chi^2$, the null hypothesis was rejected and therefore a conclusion was made that promotion of agriculture was dependent on commercial motorcycles’ trips in Laikipia East Sub-County.

The second hypothesis was: (ii) there is no significant difference between previous employment and commercial motorcycles contribution to poverty alleviation in Laikipia East Sub-County. Results show that there is a medium positive relationship of 0.318 between previous employment income and the current commercial motorcycle income. $r^2$ was therefore 0.318$^2$. The study found out that commercial motorcycle contributes 10 percent towards poverty alleviation in Laikipia East Sub-County. The study also found out that key activities which had come up as result of commercial motorcycle ridership generate gainful employment and hence alleviating poverty in Laikipia East Sub-county. The study recommended that the county government should rehabilitate the roads and construct motorcycle lanes particularly in Laikipia East Sub-County. It should also train, retrain and emphasize on best practices on motorcycle operations. The government should establish well updated and accurate data base on commercial motorcycle activities for their sustainability.