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Abstract

Despite various land policies that prescribe rights to land in many societies, women remain marginalized in access to and economic utilization of land. This is widespread in rural communities where informal institutions such as customs and traditions subsist. In most of these communities, the patriarchal structure of families is championed by the informal institutions that support male dominance. This study focuses on economic empowerment of women as it encapsulates sustainable wealth of women. It provides answers to two main research questions: a) what kind of relationship exists between land access and empowerment of women? And b) how important are individual and household attributes in informing women's empowerment through land rights? The empirical results of this study provide some new insights as they demonstrate how land rights influence women's economic empowerment. The study also finds that women's earning capacity reduces when they take up the responsibility of becoming the heads of households and that their income increases as they become more educated.

Key words: Access to land; Economic empowerment; Gender equality; Land rights; Women

1. Introduction

Studies have been carried out on women's contributions to household and national economy,

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