

Review of: "Examining Water Use and Sanitation Practices in Rural Schools of Chegutu District, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe"

Saeideh Samani¹

¹ Water Research Institute

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Overall, the paper titled "Examining Water Use and Sanitation Practices in Rural Schools of Chegutu District, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe" addresses an important issue related to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in rural schools. However, there are several areas where the paper could be improved. Here are some comments and suggestions for improvement:

- The title is quite long and could be more concise. Consider simplifying it while still conveying the main focus of the study.
- The abstract is comprehensive, but it could be more concise. It should briefly highlight the main objectives, methods, results, and conclusions without unnecessary details.
- The study should provide more details about the sampling strategy employed. For instance, it should explain how the selected schools were representative of the entire Chegutu District and if any biases were considered. The study might face challenges if the selected schools are not representative, and the findings might not be generalizable to the broader population.
- The study relies heavily on questionnaires for data collection. It is essential to assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire to ensure that the responses accurately reflect the participants' experiences.
- The Likert scale used in the questionnaire may be subject to interpretation bias, and efforts should be made to validate the scale's effectiveness.
- Interpretation of findings should consider potential confounding variables that may affect the relationship between the identified issues and WASH practices.
- The study incorporates qualitative data from interviews, but the integration of these qualitative findings with quantitative results is not well-delineated. A more thorough discussion on how qualitative insights complement quantitative data would enhance the study's robustness.
- The study covers data from 2017 to 2022, but there is no detailed longitudinal analysis. Examining trends over time and identifying any changes in water and sanitation practices would strengthen the study's conclusions.

- The study highlights challenges such as insufficient toilets and inadequate facilities, but it lacks a detailed examination of the reasons behind these issues, such as financial constraints, government policies, or community involvement.
- The study mentions donor aid, but it does not delve into the potential influence of external factors on WASH practices in the schools, including government policies, NGOs, or community initiatives.
- The study should provide information on ethical considerations, such as informed consent, confidentiality, and participant anonymity, to ensure that the research adheres to ethical standards.
- The study offers recommendations, but there is limited discussion on specific action plans or strategies to address the identified challenges. Providing clear, actionable steps would enhance the study's practical implications.
- When discussing the results, consider providing more critical analysis and interpretation. Why are certain trends observed, and what are their implications?
- The language in some sections is verbose and could be streamlined for clarity. Avoid unnecessary repetition. For instance, there is repetition of the phrase "lack of" in several instances.