

Review of: "Exploring the Link between Climate Change and Farming in Rural and Peri-Urban Communities in Sierra Leone"

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REVIEW REPORT of Manuscript Submitted to Qeios Journal 4.0 August 2024 TITLE:

Exploring the Link between Climate Change and Farming in Rural and Peri-Urban Sierra Leone

Preamble

This review examines the various sections of the manuscript, on the basis of which a final recommendation is made. The following sections are reviewed as follows:

Title

The title has been well couched and, answers to the basic essence and focus of the manuscript.

Abstract

First of all, the abstract appears too long and fails the conciseness test. It contains materials that may be deemed to be superfluous. Again, an abstract must capture some striking facts about the findings that may attract readers to the paper. For instance, the part that reads "the findings reveals that farmers grow mainly food crops like rice, cassava and vegetables ..." or "the main animals reared by farmers are poultry, cattle and goats..." are not striking enough to be captured in the abstract. Such findings as farmers' coping mechanisms, reasons for increase or decline in yields may be rather interesting to be contained in the abstract. Capturing the research questions in the abstract may not be necessary. Perhaps, the key objectives of the study may suffice.

Introduction

While the Introduction sets a good tone for the paper, it fails to discuss the theory that underpins the study. The author(s) discuss several concepts related to the study area i.e. climate change, coping mechanisms etc. However, the author(s) fail to crystalize these concepts into a framework or model that drives the entire study and forms the basis for the research questions. At least the discussion of a theory or authors' conceptual framework may be necessary.

Some of the research questions can be better couched. For instance, the question that states "Is there a relationship between the decline in yields of crops cultivated and climate change?" could be better couched as "In what ways has

climate change affected yields in crops...?” or “How has climate change affected yields of crops over the last 10 years?” Again, the author(s) should remove the bracket in the part that reads “Studies by (Wang et al, 2007; Aryal et al, 2019b)....” “Studies by Wang et al (2007) and Aryal et al (2019b)....”

Methodology

The author(s) mention the selection of seven district for the study. However, no mention is made of how the selection was done and from what population. Agai, the author(s) are inconsistent in the use of data as singular or plural. In most part of the write-up the author(s) write “data was....” In other parts “data were...” Data are always plural. Hence the latter is preferred.

Results and Discussions

The major flaw observed in reporting the findings of the study had to do with language and the correct application of the basic rule of consistency in the use of the tense form of the verb. This is something that runs through the entire write-up and must be corrected. For example, the sentence “Figure 7 shows that slightly over two-fifths (41%) of the respondents who **stated** that there **has** been a decline in the yield” should rather read “Figure 7 showed that slightly over two-fifths (41%) of the respondents who **stated** that there **had** been a decline in the yield” This is because you do not switch tenses from the past to the present tense within the same sentence. Again, “On the other hand, a small number (7.9%) **stated** that the decrease in main crop production **is** as a result of an outbreak of pests and diseases on their farms.” This should rather read “On the other hand, a small number (7.9%) **stated** that the decrease in main crop production **was** as a result of an outbreak of pests and diseases on their farms.” There are many instances of this inconsistency that must be corrected.

The author(s) state “It is noted in Figure 5 that between 2014-2017, slightly less than eight percent (47.5%)....” Author(s) must check this. The use of contractions such as don’t should not be encouraged. Check the last paragraph of the sub-title “Impact of rainfall on farming” where the author(s) write “...as most of the crops don’t do well.” “...as most of the crops do not do well.” is preferred as contractions are not allowed in academic writing.

It is observed that in giving examples, author(s) use the phrase “crops like cassava, vegetable and” In giving examples, it is better to use the phrase “crops such as cassava, vegetables, and”

Conclusion

The conclusion attempts to summarize the findings of the study. However, it fails to discuss the policy implications of the findings, on the basis of which recommendations can be given. Author(s) must address this weakness. A study of this nature must end with some recommendations.

General Assessment

Generally, the manuscript makes a good attempt at contributing to the research area. However, in its present form, it must be improved for it to be accepted for publication. It is recommended that the author(s) address the issues raised in this



review to enhance the quality of the manuscript for publication.

Thank you.

Signed

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