Review of: "A Socio-Historical Look at Agricultural Policy Reform in Benin (West Africa) since 1960: A Literature Review"

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The paper provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced by the agricultural sector in Benin, linking them to historical policy shifts.

The introduction effectively establishes the significance of agriculture in developing countries and outlines the dual focus on productivity enhancement and food security. However, there are areas for improvement. The introduction could benefit from a clearer thesis statement to guide the reader. Additionally, incorporating a brief roadmap of the subsequent sections would enhance the overall structure. The paper's strength lies in its emphasis on diachronic analysis, offering a valuable perspective on the evolution of agricultural policies. Addressing these issues can refine the clarity and flow, ensuring a more engaging and organized narrative.

The materials and methods section is robust in detailing the data collection and analysis procedures. However, certain issues can be addressed for a more refined approach:

Search Strategy Transparency: The section could benefit from a clearer explanation of how specific search terms and Boolean operators were employed. Providing examples of key search queries might enhance transparency.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: Although the inclusion and exclusion criteria are mentioned, it would be beneficial to elaborate on specific criteria used for selecting or excluding certain documents to ensure a more rigorous methodology.

Data Analysis Rationale: A more detailed rationale for the chosen data analysis methods, such as thematic content analysis and Likert-type scale assessment, would strengthen the section. Explain why these methods were suitable for the research objectives.

Document Selection Criteria: The criteria for selecting specific policy documents could be expanded upon to provide insight into why these particular documents were deemed crucial for analysis.

- It would contribute to a more transparent and methodologically sound presentation, enhancing the overall quality of the materials and methods section.

Methodological Linkage: Establish a more explicit link between the results and the methodology, explaining how each criterion in the data selection process contributes to the final set of 44 documents. This will provide a clearer

understanding of the document selection process.

Temporal Trends Interpretation: While the temporal analysis is insightful, consider providing additional interpretation or discussion about the significance of the observed increase in publications from 2001 onward. This could help contextualize the trends within the broader landscape of agricultural policies in Benin.

Document Categories Significance: Elaborate on the significance of the document categories (scientific articles, books, theses, study reports) and how each category contributes uniquely to the understanding of agricultural policies.

Relevance Analysis Reflection: Offer a brief reflection on the distribution of relevance scores (36.4% excellent, 29.5% good, 34.1% satisfactory). Discuss how this distribution may influence the reliability and robustness of the synthesized information.

Thematic Subdivision: Break down the discussion into thematic sections for each major period (1960-1972, 1972-1990, 1990-2006). This subdivision would aid readers in navigating and comprehending the intricate evolution of agricultural policies.

Critical Reflection: Following the analysis of each period, include a brief reflection on the successes and failures. Highlighting the consequences of specific policies or strategies would add depth to the understanding of the trajectory.

Connection to Broader Context: Discuss how global trends or external influences (e.g., World Bank prescriptions, structural adjustment plans) impacted the trajectory of reforms in Benin. This broader contextualization can provide a more holistic understanding of the driving forces behind policy shifts.

Role of Ideologies: Emphasize the role of ideologies, such as economic liberalism, Marxism, and nationalism, in shaping agricultural policies during each period.

Consistency and Discrepancies: Address any inconsistencies or contradictions observed across the periods. This may involve discussing how certain policy directions persisted or were abandoned and the reasons behind such decisions.

Local Impact: Discuss the impact of reforms on local farmers and rural communities. Include insights into how the changes influenced livelihoods, land ownership, and socio-economic conditions at the grassroots level.

Incorporate Visuals: Consider incorporating visual aids, such as timelines or diagrams, to visually represent the shifts in agricultural policies. Visual elements can enhance the reader's comprehension and retention of the complex historical narrative.

Some minor revisions, like revising citations in the text and list of references, and reformulating the conclusion,

All the best for the publication.