

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 56891

Title: Analyzing the Long-Run Determinants of Rice Production in Nepal: Evidence from an ARDL Approach (1990–2019).

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity			✓	
Significance			✓	

Reviewer Name: ANAPANA GOPAL

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

General Comments

The manuscript examines the long-run determinants of rice production in Nepal using an ARDL framework (1990–2019). The topic is highly relevant given Nepal's dependence on rice for food security and the increasing pressures from climate change, trade dynamics, and resource constraints.

The study attempts to combine econometric modeling with policy relevance, which is commendable. However, the manuscript currently suffers from serious issues in methodological clarity, inconsistency in variables, repetition, and language quality. While the empirical approach has potential, the presentation and rigor are insufficient for publication without minor revisions.

Content and Originality

Strengths:

- Focus on rice production in Nepal is important and policy-relevant.
- Use of ARDL approach is appropriate for time-series analysis with mixed integration orders.
- Inclusion of climate (temperature), economic (exchange rate), and infrastructure (electricity) variables is valuable.
- Attempt to link findings with policy recommendations (import substitution, climate resilience).

Concerns:

- The novelty is moderate:
 - Many studies already apply ARDL to agricultural production.
- Lack of a clear research gap statement:
 - What specifically distinguishes this study from previous Nepal-focused studies?
- Inconsistency:
 - Title mentions rice production, but results frequently refer to cereal production

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- Forecasting to 2060 is mentioned but not presented or explained

Suggestion:

- Clearly define:
 - Research gap
 - Contribution (e.g., inclusion of imports, exchange rate, climate variables together)
- Maintain consistency (rice vs cereal)

Technical Quality

Strengths:

- ARDL methodology is appropriate.
- Use of:
 - Unit root testing (ADF)
 - Bounds testing
 - FMOLS and CCR for robustness is commendable.

Minor Concerns:

1. Model Specification Issues

- Variables listed are inconsistent across sections:
 - Abstract vs Methodology vs Table
- Missing:
 - Model equation (explicit ARDL form)
 - Functional form justification (log-linear?)

2. Econometric Diagnostics Missing

- No reporting of:
 - Serial correlation test (e.g., Breusch-Godfrey)
 - Heteroskedasticity test
 - Stability tests (CUSUM, CUSUMSQ)
- No short-run dynamics (ECM model missing)

3. Cointegration Interpretation

- Bounds test reported, but:
 - No discussion of critical values properly
 - No ECM coefficient shown

4. Data Issues

- Sample size is very small (29 observations after adjustment)
- No discussion of:
 - Data limitations
 - Structural breaks (important for Nepal economy)

5. Forecasting Weakness

- Forecast to 2060 is mentioned but:
 - No model, figures, or explanation provided
 - No scenario details

6. Interpretation Problems

- Some results are questionable:
 - Negative impact of cultivated area not well justified
- Overinterpretation:
 - Causal claims from time-series correlation

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Suggestion:

- Include:
 - Full ARDL equation
 - ECM results
 - Diagnostic tests
- Properly present forecasting methodology or remove claim

Language and Presentation

Strengths:

- Technical terms are used appropriately.
- Overall intent is understandable.

Minor Issues:

- Numerous **grammar and spelling errors**, e.g.:
 - "has hurted" → incorrect
 - "limitedlimited" → duplication
 - "imort" → typo
 - "Itmen's" → incorrect
- Sentence structure is often unclear or awkward
- Repetition of paragraphs (imports & electricity effects repeated)

Suggestion:

- Requires **minor language editing**
- Remove redundancy and improve clarity

Structure and Organization

Strengths:

- Standard sections included (Introduction, Methodology, Results, Conclusion)

Concerns:

- Poor organization:
 - Results mixed with general background
- Tables and outputs:
 - Poor formatting
 - Not properly explained
- Missing:
 - Separate Results and Discussion sections clarity
- Repetition in Results section

Suggestion:

- Reorganize as:
 - Introduction → Literature Review → Methodology → Results → Discussion → Conclusion
- Clearly explain tables and coefficients

References and Citations

Strengths:

- Extensive reference list
- Inclusion of recent studies

Concerns:

- **Duplicate references** (same articles repeated)
- Inconsistent formatting

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- Some irrelevant or poorly cited sources
- Missing proper citation formatting (e.g., incomplete URLs, inconsistent styles)

Suggestion:

- Remove duplicates
- Standardize citation style (APA/Harvard)
- Ensure all references are relevant and properly formatted

Overall Recommendation

The manuscript has **good potential** but currently lacks the **technical rigor, clarity, and consistency required for publication**. Minor revisions are necessary to improve methodological robustness, presentation, and language quality.

Final Decision:

Minor Revision Required