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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 59798

Manuscript Title: SOCIAL COHESION AS A COMMUNITY RESILIENCE STRATEGY IN RESPONSE TO PRESSURES EXERTED BY TRANSHUMANCE ON THE AGONLIN PLATEAU IN CENTRAL BENIN,

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

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

Reviewer Name: Dr. Abdul Haseeb Mir

Detailed Reviewer's Repot

General Overview

The academic article titled "Social cohesion as a community resilience strategy in response to pressures exerted by transhumance on the Agonlin Plateau in central Benin" investigates the socio-cultural and economic mechanisms that enable agricultural farmers and sedentary Fulani herders to maintain peaceful coexistence amidst recurrent crop damage caused by seasonal transhumant herds. Using a mixed-methods design across the communes of Zagnanado, Covè, and Ouinhi—combining 41 documentary analyses, 39 semi-structured interviews, 10 participant observations, and a survey of 244 respondents (219 farmers and 25 sedentary Fulani)—the study examines how shared rituals, public festivities, political participation, livestock entrustment (*confiage*), night-penning (*parcage*), hiring young Fulani herders, and amicable dispute mediation foster mutual interdependence and trust.

A notable strength of the manuscript is its rich ethnographic and empirical grounding in endogenous conflict-prevention practices. By linking classical sociological concepts of social cohesion and social capital (Durkheim, Putnam, Luhmann) to concrete agropastoral arrangements—such as the "1-in-2" calf-sharing rule in cattle entrustment and organic soil fertilization through *parcage*—the authors convincingly demonstrate how economic reciprocity and shared ritual life create affective bonds that deter farmers from escalating crop-damage disputes to formal police or judicial authorities.

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However, to meet the standards required for final academic publication, the manuscript requires several minor revisions to address structural numbering gaps, visual artifacts, and bibliographic inconsistencies:

- **Section Numbering and Heading Corrections:** In Section 2 ("RESULTATS"), subsection 2.1 ("Initiatives collectives et intégration") jumps directly to subsection 2.3 ("Arrangements de confiage et de parcage des animaux") on page 10, omitting subsection 2.2, and then repeats the number 2.3 for the subsequent subsection ("Location des services de jeunes bouviers...") on page 12. These subsections should be renumbered sequentially as 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3. Additionally, the manuscript title and abstract are written in English while the body of the paper is in French; the authors should ensure a French title and abstract are included alongside the English versions per standard bilingual journal conventions.
- **Figure Labels, Tables, and Visual Layout:** In Figure 3 (page 9), the x-axis labels contain spelling errors—specifically *"Echanges hatSapps"* (instead of *Échanges WhatsApp*) and *"Ragio"* (instead of *Radio*)—and the percentage/unit label on the y-axis is missing. Furthermore, Figures 1, 2, and 3 are duplicated as raw extracted text blocks beneath the embedded images, and Table 1 (page 6) has misaligned column numbers (*"53 4970"*, *"73 6950"*, *"8849 93"*), while spelling *"Ouinhi"* as *"Quinhi"*.
- **Citation and Bibliography Verification:** Several in-text citations do not match the years or spellings in the bibliography—for example, *Strauss et Glass (1967)* (page 5) is omitted from the bibliography; *Alimi et al. (2016)* (page 4) is listed as *2015* in the bibliography; *Inoue et al. (2022)* (page 2) is listed as *2015*; *Jordan (2020)* (page 13) is listed as *2015*; *Luhmann (2009)* (page 14) is listed as *2006*; *Zgolli et Zaiem (2017)* (page 14) is listed as *2014*; and *Theda et Mercado (2024)* (page 2) appears as *"heda, M., & Mercado, M."* in the bibliography. Other in-text citations such as *Durkheim (1893)*, *Putnam (1995)*, *Crozier et Friedberg (1993)*, and *Bronckart (2010)* should also be added to the reference list, and non-relevant placeholder citations (such as Bardsley et al., 2021 on *Salmonella* in agricultural soils) should be verified.
- **Copyediting:** A brief copyedit is needed to remove stray text fragments (e.g., *"UNDE nuance, social"* on page 1; *"sont p"* on page 3; *"actions"* on page 13) and fix minor French typographical slips (such as *"accueil"* instead of *accueille*, *"du Centre eu Nord Bénin"*, and *"au portail du seuil de saturation"*).

Addressing these numbering, graphical, and bibliographic corrections will ensure the manuscript stands as a polished and valuable contribution to rural sociology and conflict-resolution scholarship.

ACCEPTED WITH MINOR REVISION

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