EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL
by European Scientific Institute

Paper: **"Rice Export and Its Effect on Gross Domestic Product in Nigeria: Growth 2000 - 2023"**

Submitted: 29 April 2025
Accepted: 23 October 2026
Published: 31 October 2026

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Doi: 10.19044/esj.2026.v22n28p91

Peer review:

Reviewer 1: Uchenna Okefi
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Reviewer 2: Ruzica Loncaric
Josip J. Strossmayer University, Croatia

Reviewer 3: Elisabetta Venezia
University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy

Reviewer A:
Recommendation: Revisions Required

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

The title is clear.

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

The abstract presented the objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.
However, there appear to be many sentence fragments (missing subjects) in the abstract. Also, was italicizing the abstract a requirement for the manuscript formatting? If not, all fields mentioned here need to be adjusted.

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

There appear to be a few grammatical errors, and a few spelling mistakes (for example, competitiveness and not competiveness, F-statistic and not F-statistics, ordinary least squares and not ordinary least square, etc.) There appear to be many sentence fragments (missing subjects) in the whole manuscript. These need to be adjusted

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

The various models applied in the study were clearly explained. However, the data used in the study and how they were obtained were not described or mentioned in the methodology section. Details on data collection are highly essential for an article.

The results are clear and do not contain errors.

The table labels are wrong. For example, it should be Table 1 and not Table 4.1. The same applies to the figure labeling. The P-value applied in this study is somewhat unclear. If the P-value used was $p<0.05$ and the result is not significant at this threshold, then you should state that it is not significant at $p<0.05$. There is the use of $p<0.05$ and $p>0.05$ at the same time in this manuscript. The P-value threshold applied in this study needs to be clearly outlined.

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

The concluding chapter is clear.

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

The reference is appropriate.

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

5

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

2

Please rate the RESULTS of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

5

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

5

Overall Recommendation!!!

Return for major revision and resubmission

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

I recommend thorough, careful editing and revision of the manuscript.

Reviewer B:
Recommendation: Revisions Required

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

The title is clear, informative and appropriate for the content of the article.

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

The abstract clearly states the objectives, methodology, key findings, and conclusions of the study. It states the objective of analysing the effect of rice export on Nigeria's GDP, describes the analytical techniques used (trend analysis, OLS and ARDL models), summarises the key results, and concludes with policy recommendations based on the findings.

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

The manuscript is understandable overall but contains numerous grammatical, spelling, punctuation and formatting errors. Therefore I suggest careful proofreading and professional language editing to improve clarity, consistency and overall readability.
For example: "Nigeria leads the African in rice production" should be "Nigeria leads Africa in rice production."
In several places, there are missing spaces after punctuation marks, such as "gaps (Kaur et al. 2022).Currency fluctuations...".
Several references contain formatting inconsistencies, duplicated entries, and citation-style issues.

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

The methodology is well described in general. The authors define the study area, data period, variables used and analytical techniques clearly, including trend analysis, Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) unit root tests, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression and the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) model. Also discussed are the model specifications and a priori expectations. However, more detail on data sources, variable measurement, model selection criteria and diagnostic tests would improve methodological rigour and reproducibility.
Some particular weaknesses are the following:
- The methodology section does not clearly state the source of GDP, rice export and exchange rate data.
- The lag-selection procedure is not described.
- There is no reference to diagnostic tests for serial correlation, heteroskedasticity or model stability.
- The ARDL specification appears to include GDP on both sides of the equation, which might need a clearer presentation and justification.

The results are clear and do not contain errors.

The results are clear, well organised and include appropriate use of tables and statistical outputs. However, some inconsistencies in the interpretation of results and statistical reporting need to be clarified. The authors should carefully review the results section to make sure that all conclusions are fully supported by the statistical evidence provided.
Concerns include, for example:
- Contradictory analysis of the trend of rice export.
Table 4.5 shows that the coefficient of time trend for rice export is statistically not significant (p=0.8168). But it is mentioned in the text that rice export has positive and significant trend at 1% level. - Wrong interpretation of the OLS results. The interpretation needs to be revised.
- incorrect interpretation of R-squared in the report.
- Doubtful reporting of unit roots. The unit root table indicates that all the variables are stationary at level; however, it is difficult to verify the result of ADF since it does not show the critical values and p-values.
- Discussions about rice export trends differed.
- The description accompanying Figure 4.3 in terms of strong growth patterns does not match the insignificant statistical trend coefficient, leading to a discrepancy between the graphical and econometric interpretations.

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

The conclusion is generally supported by the results and adequately captures the main findings of the study. The authors rightly conclude that rice exports contribute little to the Nigerian GDP at the moment and suggest ways to increase productivity, export competitiveness and value chain development. However, given some inconsistencies in the interpretation of the statistical results, the conclusion should be amended after correcting the identified issues in the results section so as to ensure full consistency between the evidence and the claims made.

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

The references are generally adequate and relevant to the subject matter. However, the reference list has inconsistent formatting, duplicate entries and possible mismatches between in-text citations and reference entries. Authors should meticulously verify all citations and references to confirm that each in-text citation is included in the reference list and that each reference listed is indeed utilised within the manuscript.
Specific issues found:
- recurrent reference
Kang (2015) is listed twice in the reference list.
- Author names inconsistent:
In the text, Sanjuán-López and Dawson (2010) are cited, while in the references both Sanjuán, Ana & Dawson, P. (2010) and Sanjuán-López, A. I., & Dawson, P. J. (2010) are presented. This looks like duplication/inconsistent formatting.
- Reference accuracy problems
Henneberry and Curry are cited inconsistently. The manuscript talks about a study on Pakistan, but the reference given is called Agricultural Import Demand in Large Markets, which might not match the study discussed in the literature review. This needs to be verified.
- Formatting mistakes
The list of references is a mixture of different citation styles (journal titles, capitalisation, URLs, DOI presentation, and publisher information).
Need for cross-checking citation references
A careful check should be made to ensure that all works cited in the text are included in the references and that no uncited references are present in the bibliography. Based on the review of the manuscript, most of the major citations seem to be included, but the duplicate and potentially mismatched entries indicate that a full audit is needed.

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the RESULTS of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

4

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Overall Recommendation!!!

Accepted, minor revision needed

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

I think that the manuscript is on a very important topic on role of rice export on economic growth in Nigeria. The use of econometric techniques such as OLS and ARDL is relevant to the research objectives. Overall, the paper is well structured and provides useful policy implications.
However, before publication, the authors must resolve several issues.
Review and revise the language, grammar, punctuation and spelling of the manuscript. Professional English editing recommended.
Describe the data source and provide further information on the measurement and units of the variables used in the analysis.
Please, check the methodology section. Provide more details on the lag selection procedures, model diagnostics and the justification for the ARDL specification.
Results section can be checked for errors in statistical interpretation. In particular, the discussion of significance levels, trend analysis and R-squared values should be consistent with the results reported.
Include the critical values and/or the probability values in the presentation of the unit root test results.
Change the conclusion to reflect the limitations of the study and the future directions.
Please double check all references and in-text citations. Remove duplicate citations , correct citation formatting issues , and ensure that all cited works appear in the reference list and vice versa .
Overall the study is merited, and the findings could be useful for policymakers and researchers. Once the above issues are resolved, the manuscript will be much improved and more suitable for publication.

ESJ *Manuscript Evaluation Form 2026*

This form is designed to summarize the manuscript peer review that you have completed and to ensure that you have considered all appropriate criteria in your review. Your review should provide a clear statement to the authors and editors of the modifications necessary before the paper can be published, or the specific reasons for rejection.

Please respond within the appointed time so that we can give the authors timely responses and feedback.

NOTE: ESJ promotes a peer review procedure based on scientific validity and technical quality of the paper (not perceived impact). You are also not required to do proofreading of the paper. It could be recommended as part of the revision.
The copyrights of the report are with the publisher, and the data can be used for research purposes.

ESJ editorial office would like to express its special gratitude for your time and efforts. Our editorial team is a substantial reason that stands ESJ out from the crowd!

Reviewer Name: Ružica Lončarić	
University, Country: Faculty og Agrobiotechnical Sciences Osijek, Croatia	
Date Manuscript Received: 21.5.2026.	Date Review Report Submitted: 22.5.2026.
Manuscript Title: **RICE EXPORT AND ITS EFFECT ON GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IN NIGERIA: 2000 - 2023.**	
ESJ Manuscript Number:	
You agree that your name is revealed to the author of the paper: yes	
You approve, your name as a reviewer of this paper is available in the "review history" of the paper: yes You approve, this review report is available in the "review history" of the paper: yes	

Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

Questions	***Rating Result*** [Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

1. The title is clear, and it is adequate for the content of the article.	**4**
The title is clear and easy to understand. It matches the topic of the article and explains what the study is about. However, the word “effect” may be too strong because the results show only a weak relationship.	
2. The abstract presents objectives, methods, and results.	**4**
The abstract explains the aim of the study, methods used, and main results. It gives a good summary of the article. However, it could be shorter and written more clearly in some parts	
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	**4**
The article has some grammar mistakes and unclear sentences. Some words and sentences need better English. Language editing is recommended to improve readability.	
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	**3**
The methods are explained, and the models used are listed clearly. However, some parts are confusing, especially the explanation of variables in the models. More explanation is needed.	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	**3**
The results are shown in tables and explained. However, some interpretations do not fully match the statistical results. A few parts should be checked again for accuracy.	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	**4**
The conclusion matches the results of the study and gives useful recommendations. However, the study limitations could be explained better.	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	**3**
The article uses many references related to the topic. However, some references are repeated, and some sources are not academic enough. The reference style should also be improved.	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	**x**
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Some interpretations should better match the statistical findings. For example, rice export trend is described as significant, while the reported p-value suggests it is not statistically significant.

The authors should remove repeated references (for example, Kang, 2015 appears twice) and use more academic journal sources instead of websites such as Wikipedia or Investopedia where possible.
The conclusion would be stronger if the authors explain study limitations, such as the small number of variables used and other factors that may influence GDP.

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only: