

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-51097

Date: 17/4/2025

Title: INFLUENCE OF WOODY FRUIT SPECIES SUSCEPTIBLE TO LORANTHACEAE ON THE LEVEL OF INFESTATION OF COCOA TREES: CASE OF AGROFORESTRY COCOA FARMING SYSTEMS IN DALOA (COTE D'IVOIRE)

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: Ahmed M. Saqr

Date: 17/4/2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

(To be published with the manuscript in the journal)

The reviewer is requested to provide a brief comment (3-4 lines) highlighting the significance, strengths, or key insights of the manuscript. This comment will be Displayed in the journal publication alongside with the reviewers name.

The manuscript provides important insights into the impact of Loranthaceae parasitism on cocoa trees within agroforestry systems, highlighting a significant positive correlation between the infestation of associated fruit trees and cocoa trees. Its strength lies in the extensive field survey across multiple sites and the detailed floristic inventory, offering valuable data for managing cocoa agroforestry sustainability in Côte d'Ivoire.

REVIEWER'S REPORT*Detailed Reviewer's Report*

I sincerely thank the Editorial Board of International Journal of Advanced Research (IJAR) for entrusting me with the opportunity to review the manuscript titled "Influence of Woody Fruit Species Susceptible to Loranthaceae on the Level of Infestation of Cocoa Trees: Case of Agroforestry Cocoa Farming Systems in Daloa (Côte d'Ivoire)".

The manuscript addresses an important ecological and agronomic issue regarding the parasitism of cocoa trees by Loranthaceae in agroforestry systems. Overall, the research idea is timely and the manuscript is interesting; however, it requires substantial improvement in terms of scientific rigor, clarity, methodology description, discussion depth, and presentation quality.

Hence, I recommend a Major Revision before it can be reconsidered for publication.

Below are my detailed comments to guide the authors in improving their work.

Major Comments:***Abstract:***

Could the abstract be better structured to include explicit objectives, methods, key results (with exact significant values where appropriate), and a strong conclusion highlighting practical recommendations?

Introduction:

In the Introduction section, can the authors elaborate more on the knowledge gap and justify why previous research on Loranthaceae–cocoa interactions was insufficient, thus necessitating this current study?

Materials and Methods:

The method mentions the "surface survey" and "roving survey." Can you describe how you ensured randomization and minimized observer bias during these surveys?

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The statistical analysis is briefly described (ANOVA, Newman-Keuls). Could the authors explain whether assumptions for ANOVA (normality, homogeneity of variances) were checked before proceeding?

Results – Images and Tables:

Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 are referenced in the text, but their resolution and clarity are low. Could the authors provide higher-resolution images with clear labels and legends?

Table 1 and Table 2 are very large and dense. Would it be better to reorganize these tables into supplementary material and summarize key results in the main text?

Discussion:

In the Discussion section, can the authors better highlight how their results compare quantitatively and qualitatively with the works cited (e.g., Yao 2020, Houenon et al. 2012) rather than merely stating "our results are similar"?

The authors mention the "extension of Loranthaceae proliferation" (lines 355-356). Can you discuss what specific agricultural practices may have contributed to this trend?

Conclusion:

The conclusion could be strengthened by providing specific management recommendations for farmers and stakeholders based on the study's findings. Can you elaborate practical suggestions rather than general statements?

References:

Several references such as "ICCO 2020" and "POGCI 2023" are cited, but not consistently formatted in the References section. Could the authors

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thoroughly check for reference style and consistency according to IJAR guidelines?

General Scientific Writing:

Could the overall English language of the manuscript be improved for fluency and readability (e.g., sentence structures, transitions between ideas)? A thorough language editing is recommended.

Minor Comments:

Line 21 (Abstract):

“positive correlation between the incidence of Loranthaceae on these ligneous fruit trees and that recorded on cocoa trees” – Consider specifying the correlation coefficient value here for clarity.

Line 37 (Introduction):

"Cocoa production contributes more than 10 % to Ivorian GDP" – Please cite the specific source directly after this statement (currently it appears after the next sentence).

Line 72 (Study Site):

“lies between 6°52' and 6.87° N latitude” – There is an inconsistency in the format. Please correct to either decimal or DMS (degrees, minutes, seconds) format consistently.

Line 150 (Materials and Methods - Floristic Composition):

"Floristic composition here refers to..." – This sentence seems repetitive and could be rephrased for clarity.

Line 208 (Results - Average number of Loranthaceae tufts):

“This average number of tufts is significantly higher on cocoa trees...” – Add p-value or statistical output here to enhance transparency.

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Line 318 (Results - Proportion of incidence):

In Table 4, incidence values for some plantations are rounded inconsistently. Please standardize decimal places across all numerical data.

Line 399 (Conclusion and Recommendations):

“Future studies could explore other factors...” – It would be stronger if you specified examples (e.g., "shade management, pruning practices, host tree density").