Effectiveness of Pfumvudza as a resilient strategy against drought impacts in rural communities of Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Pfumvudza is a Zimbabwean vernacular language term literally referring to the blooming of new leaves during the spring season signalling the beginning of a new farming season. It used to refer, to the conservation agriculture concept, a crop production intensification approach under which farmers ensure the efficient use of resources on a small area of land in order to optimise its management. The research assessed the effectiveness of Pfumvudza as a resilient strategy against climate change induced drought impacts in rural communities Zimbabwe, case of Munyarari ward 20. The descriptive case study was used triangulating data collection methods. The sample size was 96 households who practised Pfumvudza (20% of the target population) and all the 18 households (100%) which did not practise Pfumvudza. These were randomly sampled from five conveniently selected villages in the ward. Four key informants were purposively selected. Data was analysed using SPSS and content analysis. Climate change induced drought impacts greatly affected communal farmers who depended on rain fed agriculture. This led to food insecurity which attracted donor aid year after year. Pfumvudza improved yields and reduced donor aid in the area. Mann–Whitney test results indicated that there was a difference between yields of crops before and after Pfumvudza scheme. Mann–Whitney test results also revealed that there was a significance difference between those who practiced Pfumvudza and those who did not. It was concluded that Pfumvudza increased resilience against climate change induced drought impacts and improved yields in rural communities of Zimbabwe where it was implemented. The research recommends farmers to fully embrace the Pfumvudza strategy so as to realize high yields and improve food security.