iJRASET
International Journal For Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 14 **Issue:** IV **Month of publication:** April 2026

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2026.80237

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International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 14 Issue IV Apr 2026- Available at www.ijraset.com

Climate Change and Its Influence on Local Agricultural Systems: An Analytical Study of Environmental and Socio-Economic Impacts

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Abstract: ***Climate change has emerged as a major challenge affecting agricultural systems across the globe, particularly at the local level where farmers directly depend on natural conditions. Increasing temperature trends, unpredictable rainfall, and frequent extreme weather events are altering traditional farming practices and reducing agricultural productivity (IPCC, 2021). This study examines the impact of climate variability on crop yield, soil health, water availability, and socio-economic conditions of farmers. The findings indicate that climate change not only affects physical production but also increases economic risks and livelihood instability (Lobell et al., 2011; Wheeler & von Braun, 2013). Although farmers are adopting adaptive measures such as crop diversification and improved irrigation, these efforts are limited by financial constraints and lack of institutional support (Bryan et al., 2013). The study highlights the need for integrated strategies combining policy support, technological advancement, and sustainable agricultural practices.***

Keywords: Climate Change, Agriculture, Crop Productivity, Soil Health, Water Scarcity, Adaptation, Sustainability

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture has traditionally been dependent on stable climatic conditions, where predictable seasonal cycles allowed farmers to plan agricultural activities effectively. However, the growing influence of climate change has disrupted this stability, creating uncertainty in agricultural systems.

In recent decades, farmers have experienced rising temperatures, irregular rainfall, and increased frequency of extreme weather events such as droughts and floods. These changes have significantly affected crop growth cycles and reduced overall productivity (IPCC, 2021).

Temperature rise plays a crucial role in affecting plant growth. Increased heat leads to higher evapotranspiration, reducing soil moisture and limiting crop development (Lobell et al., 2011). Similarly, unpredictable rainfall patterns create water stress during critical growth stages, resulting in reduced yields and economic losses (Challinor et al., 2014).

The impact is particularly severe for smallholder farmers who rely heavily on rainfall and lack access to advanced technologies. Their vulnerability highlights the importance of understanding climate change impacts at the local level.

This study aims to analyze these challenges and explore sustainable solutions for improving agricultural resilience.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the impact of climate change on agricultural productivity
- To analyze changes in soil health and water resources
- To evaluate socio-economic effects on farmers
- To identify adaptation strategies in agriculture
- To assess the role of policy and technology

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between climate change and agriculture has been widely studied, revealing significant challenges for food production systems.

Studies show that rising temperatures negatively affect crop yields, particularly in tropical regions where crops are already near their tolerance limits (Lobell et al., 2011; Asseng et al., 2015). Even small increases in temperature can reduce productivity and increase crop failure risks.

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Climate variability further increases uncertainty in agriculture. Extreme weather events such as droughts and floods disrupt farming cycles and damage crops at critical stages (Challinor et al., 2014).

Water scarcity is another major issue. Changes in rainfall patterns and increased evaporation rates reduce water availability, making irrigation more difficult (Qadir et al., 2017; Rockström et al., 2010).

Soil degradation is also a significant concern. Climate change contributes to erosion, nutrient loss, and reduced soil fertility, which negatively affects long-term agricultural sustainability (Lal, 2015; Smith et al., 2020).

From a socio-economic perspective, farmers face increased financial risk due to unstable yields. Limited access to resources and technology makes adaptation difficult (Morton, 2007). Although sustainable practices such as climate-smart agriculture are being promoted, their adoption remains limited (Pretty et al., 2018; Bryan et al., 2013).

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1) Research Design

The study adopts a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyze climate change impacts comprehensively.

2) Data Collection Methods

Primary data was collected through surveys and interviews with farmers, while secondary data was obtained from reports and research studies (FAO, 2016).

3) Sampling Approach

A purposive sampling technique was used to include participants from diverse agricultural backgrounds and regions.

4) Data Analysis Techniques

Statistical methods were used to analyze climate trends, while thematic analysis was applied to interpret qualitative data.

5) Ethical Considerations

All participants were informed about the research purpose, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1) Changing Climate Patterns

The study reveals noticeable changes in climate behavior, including rising temperatures and irregular rainfall patterns. Seasonal predictability has declined, making agricultural planning more challenging (IPCC, 2021; NOAA, 2020).

2) Effects on Crop Production

Crop productivity has been significantly affected due to heat stress and water shortages. Major crops such as wheat and rice are highly sensitive to temperature variations (Lobell et al., 2011; Asseng et al., 2015).

Additionally, climate change has increased pest activity, further reducing crop yields (Deutsch et al., 2018).

3) Soil and Environmental Impact

Soil fertility has declined due to erosion, nutrient loss, and reduced organic matter. These changes weaken soil structure and reduce its ability to support crops (Lal, 2015; Smith et al., 2020).

4) Water Resource Challenges

Water scarcity has intensified due to irregular rainfall and increased demand for irrigation. Over-reliance on groundwater has led to declining water levels (Qadir et al., 2017; Rockström et al., 2010).

5) Socio-Economic Consequences

Farmers are facing financial instability due to unpredictable yields. Many are forced to take loans or migrate to urban areas for alternative income (World Bank, 2019; Morton, 2007).

6) Adaptation Practices

Farmers are adopting strategies such as crop diversification, drought-resistant seeds, and improved irrigation techniques (FAO, 2016). However, adoption remains limited due to lack of awareness and resources (Bryan et al., 2013).

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VI. CONCLUSION

Climate change is significantly affecting agricultural systems, creating both environmental and socio-economic challenges. The study highlights the need for integrated approaches that combine traditional knowledge with modern technology.

Policy support, technological innovation, and community participation are essential for building resilient agricultural systems and ensuring long-term sustainability (IPCC, 2021).

VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

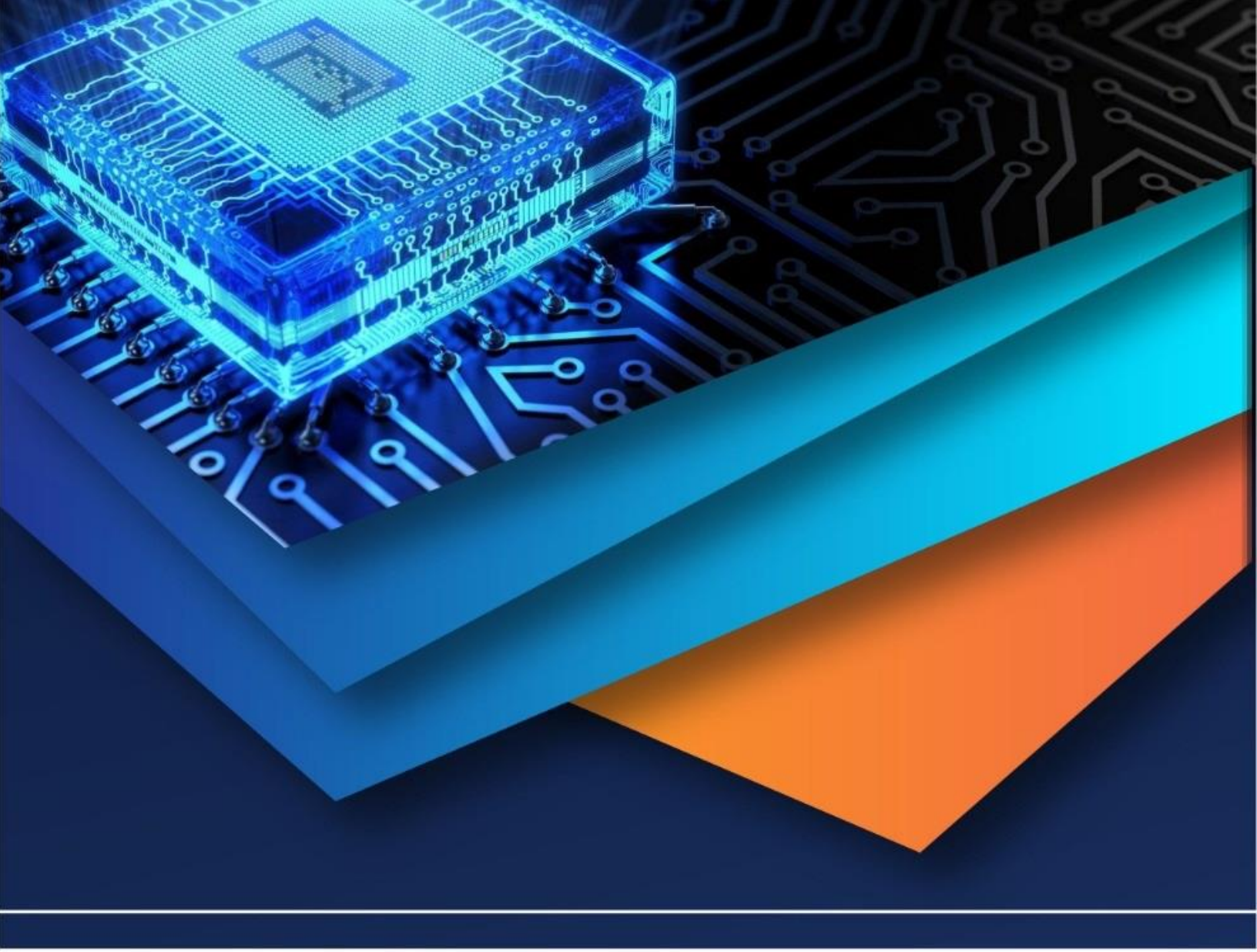
VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors express sincere gratitude to all contributors and participants who supported this research.

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