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RESEARCH ON OKRA (*ABELMOSCHUS ESCULENTUS*) IN WEST AFRICA: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

While some West African countries are among the leading producers of okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*), there is no comprehensive analysis of the research landscape regarding this crop in the region. Therefore, this systematic review provides a bibliometric analysis of research on okra in West Africa. It draws upon a search carried out on the Web of Science in January 2025 that resulted in 128 eligible publications. West Africa seems to have an important representation in academic studies related to okra. However, research on okra in the region has only begun to appear in recent years. The annual variation in publication counts indicates that the level of interest in this crop changes over time. This research field is multidisciplinary, but it mainly focuses on biological sciences, with limited involvement from economics and social sciences. The reviewed literature was linked to 11 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with 02 – Zero Hunger, 13 – Climate Action and 15 – Life on Land being the most significant. The 128 articles analyzed included authors affiliated with 144 diverse research institutions and universities. The leading affiliations were universities and research centers from Nigeria. Indeed, prominent West African institutions are primarily based in Nigeria and Ghana, with little representation from Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, and Côte d'Ivoire. Additionally, many authors were connected to institutions located outside of West Africa. Therefore, there is a need to foster research on okra in West Africa in order to unlock its potential and contribution to the development of agriculture and sustainable socio-economic development in the region. In this regard, collaboration among West African universities and research centers, as well as with other institutions in Africa and beyond, is crucial.

Keywords: *neglected and underutilised species, NUS, gumbo, Sahel, SUSTLIVES.*