IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)
Volume 31, Issue 6, Series 3 (June, 2026) 48-55
e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845.
www.iosrjournals.org

Climate Change and the Harmattan Season: Implications for the Forecasted Performance of Seasonal Goods in Nigeria.

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Abstract
Climate change has increasingly disrupted seasonal climatic patterns, posing significant challenges for businesses reliant on predictable weather conditions. In Nigeria, the Harmattan season—a dry, cold, and dusty period typically experienced between late November and mid-March—has historically guided the demand and sales of seasonal goods such as sweaters, skincare products, respiratory medications, hot beverages, and firewood/charcoal. However, between late November 2025 and January 2026, many regions experienced little or no Harmattan, leading to unexpected disruptions in consumer behavior and business performance. This study examined the impact of Harmattan season variability on the forecasted performance of seasonal goods in Nigeria, with particular attention to how irregular climatic conditions affect demand forecasting, supply chain management, and profitability. A survey research design was adopted, with data collected from 400 entrepreneurs across multiple Nigerian states using structured questionnaires. Both descriptive and inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation and regression analysis, were employed to analyze the data. Findings revealed that 60% of respondents experienced inaccurate sales forecasts due to the irregular Harmattan, leading to decreased sales, overstocking, and reduced profitability. Correlation analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between forecasted performance and actual sales, while regression analysis confirmed forecast accuracy as a significant predictor of business outcomes. The study further identified challenges faced by small and medium-scale enterprises, including limited financial buffers and inadequate adaptation strategies. Based on these findings, the study recommends adoption of climate-informed forecasting models, flexible inventory management systems, entrepreneur training on climate risk management, and institutional support from government and financial agencies. The study concludes that mitigating the economic impacts of Harmattan variability requires proactive adaptation, accurate forecasting, and coordinated support to enhance the resilience and profitability of seasonal goods businesses in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Harmattan season, climate change, forecasted performance, seasonal goods, Nigeria, small and medium enterprises, supply chain, profitability*

Date of Submission: 08-06-2026 Date of Acceptance: 19-06-2026

I. Introduction

Climate change has emerged as one of the most critical challenges confronting the global community in the twenty-first century, with far-reaching implications for natural systems, human wellbeing, and economic activities. It refers to long-term alterations in temperature, precipitation, wind systems, and the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, largely driven by anthropogenic activities such as greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, industrialization, and unsustainable land-use practices (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], 2021). Although climate change is global in scope, its impacts are disproportionately severe in developing regions, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, where economies are highly climate-sensitive and adaptive capacity remains limited (World Bank, 2022).

Nigeria is especially vulnerable to climate variability and change due to its heavy reliance on agriculture, trade, transportation, and informal economic activities. Seasonal climatic conditions play a decisive role in shaping production cycles, consumption patterns, and business performance across the country. One of the most influential seasonal climatic phenomena in Nigeria is the Harmattan season—a dry, cold, and dusty period traditionally experienced between late November and mid-March as a result of north-easterly trade winds originating from the Sahara Desert. Historically, the Harmattan season has been relatively predictable in its onset, duration, and intensity, enabling households, traders, and entrepreneurs to align economic activities with seasonal expectations (Nigerian Meteorological Agency [NiMet], 2023).

This seasonal predictability has been particularly important for businesses dealing in seasonal (seasonal) goods—products whose demand and performance are closely tied to specific weather conditions. In the Nigerian context, such goods include cold-weather clothing, blankets, skin moisturizers, petroleum jelly, respiratory medications, hot beverages, firewood, charcoal, and certain agricultural commodities. Over time, businessmen and entrepreneurs have relied on historical sales trends and past seasonal experiences to forecast demand, plan inventory, and estimate expected business performance during the Harmattan period (Kotler & Keller, 2019; Armstrong, 2020). Seasonal predictability therefore formed the backbone of business planning and demand forecasting for a large segment of Nigeria's commercial sector.

However, climate change is increasingly altering the traditional characteristics of the Harmattan season. Scientific evidence indicates growing irregularities in the timing, intensity, and duration of Harmattan conditions, including delayed onset, shortened seasons, reduced cold intensity in some years, and abnormal interactions with rainfall events (Adeyeri et al., 2020; IPCC, 2021). These climate-induced changes have weakened the reliability of historical seasonal patterns as a basis for business forecasting, thereby increasing uncertainty and risk for traders and firms.

A vivid illustration of this emerging challenge was observed between late November 2025 and January 2026, when large parts of Nigeria experienced little or no noticeable Harmattan conditions. Contrary to long-established climatic expectations, temperatures remained relatively high, humidity levels did not decline significantly, and the characteristic cold, dry, and dusty features of the Harmattan season were largely absent in many regions. Acting on long-standing experience and conventional seasonal assumptions, many businessmen and entrepreneurs stocked large quantities of Harmattan-dependent commodities in anticipation of increased demand. The unexpected failure of the Harmattan season to manifest as anticipated resulted in weak consumer demand, accumulation of unsold inventories, increased storage and holding costs, and significant financial losses.

This experience underscores a fundamental problem confronting businesses in Nigeria: the growing disconnects between traditional seasonal assumptions and actual climatic realities under conditions of climate change. Forecasting approaches that assume the regular recurrence of the Harmattan season are becoming increasingly unreliable, leading to demand forecast errors, inefficient inventory management, capital lock-up, and reduced profitability (Makridakis et al., 2020). These challenges are particularly severe for small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) and informal sector traders, who dominate Nigeria's commercial landscape and often operate with limited financial buffers, weak access to climate information, and minimal risk management capacity (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2022).

On the supply side, climate variability further complicates business performance by affecting agricultural production cycles, transportation infrastructure, and storage conditions. Unpredictable rainfall patterns overlapping with the Harmattan season disrupt harvesting, drying, and storage of agricultural commodities, while dust storms and extreme weather events impede logistics and market access (Oladipo & Adeyemi, 2021). Additionally, intensified dust conditions during irregular Harmattan periods pose health challenges, reducing outdoor economic activities and market foot traffic even as demand for health-related products may increase (Adefolalu, 2018). Businesses often struggle to anticipate and balance these interacting effects within conventional forecasting frameworks.

Beyond individual business losses, the broader economic implications are substantial. Seasonal trading constitutes a major source of livelihood for millions of Nigerians, particularly within the informal sector. When seasonal climate expectations fail, household incomes decline, employment opportunities shrink, and overall economic resilience is weakened. Despite these realities, climate change research and policy responses in Nigeria have largely focused on agriculture, health, and infrastructure, with comparatively limited attention given to commerce, demand forecasting, and the performance of seasonal goods.

The weakened or absent Harmattan conditions experienced during the 2025/2026 season therefore highlight a critical knowledge and policy gap regarding how climate change-induced alterations in seasonal climate affect the forecasted performance of seasonal goods in Nigeria. Addressing this gap is essential for improving business forecasting accuracy, reducing climate-related losses, and enhancing the resilience of Nigerian entrepreneurs and the broader economy in an era of increasing climatic uncertainty.

The broad objective of this study is to examine the implications of climate change and the Harmattan season on the forecasted performance of seasonal goods in Nigeria

The study specifically aims to:

1. Examine the effect of the absence of the 2025/2026 Harmattan season on the forecasted performance of sweaters and its consequent impact on entrepreneurs' sales and profitability.
2. Determine the impact of the missing Harmattan season on the forecasted performance of skincare products and the resulting financial performance of entrepreneurs.

3. Assess how the absence of the Harmattan season influences the forecasted performance of respiratory medications, particularly inhalers, and its effect on business profitability.
4. Evaluate the effect of no Harmattan season on the forecasted performance of hot beverages and its implications for entrepreneurs' business outcomes.
5. Ascertain the impact of the absence of the Harmattan season on the forecasted performance of firewood and charcoal and the resulting performance of businesses.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Climate change, characterized by long-term alterations in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and the frequency of extreme weather events, has become a global phenomenon with profound implications for human activities and economic systems (IPCC, 2021). In Nigeria, seasonal climatic patterns, particularly the Harmattan season, play a crucial role in shaping production cycles, consumer behavior, and business performance. The Harmattan is traditionally a dry, cold, and dusty season occurring between late November and mid-March, caused by north-easterly winds from the Sahara Desert. This season has historically been predictable, allowing businesses to plan inventory, forecast consumer demand, and optimize profit from seasonal goods such as sweaters, hot beverages, firewood, charcoal, skincare products, and respiratory medications (NiMet, 2023).

Seasonal goods, also referred to as seasonal goods, are products whose demand fluctuates according to specific seasonal patterns or climatic events. In Nigeria, these include clothing suited for cold weather, consumables like hot drinks, and health-related products such as inhalers, which experience heightened demand during the Harmattan season. Forecasted performance of seasonal goods is a critical business metric that guides inventory planning, pricing strategies, and profitability estimates. The accuracy of demand forecasting depends largely on the predictability of the season, consumer buying behavior, and historical sales data (Kotler & Keller, 2019; Armstrong, 2020).

Harmattan season variability refers to the changes in the onset, duration, intensity, and characteristics of the Harmattan as influenced by climate change. Variability may manifest as delayed onset, shortened duration, lower intensity of cold, or irregular dust patterns, all of which can disrupt traditional patterns of consumer demand and business operations (Adeyeri et al., 2020). The absence or reduction of Harmattan conditions directly impacts the forecasted performance of seasonal goods, leading to potential mismatches between expected and actual sales, inventory overstocking or understocking, and subsequent financial losses for businesses, particularly for SMEs and informal sector traders (ILO, 2022).

Consumer demand is influenced by climatic conditions and perceived need for seasonal goods. For instance, colder temperatures and dry conditions drive higher sales of sweaters and hot beverages, while increased dust levels raise demand for respiratory medications and skincare products. Changes in Harmattan patterns disrupt these demand cycles, thereby affecting the accuracy of business forecasts and overall performance (Makridakis et al., 2020).

Supply chain dynamics for seasonal goods are also affected by Harmattan variability. Agricultural produce, transportation networks, and storage conditions may be disrupted by irregular weather events, dust storms, or unexpected climatic shifts. These disruptions impact the availability, pricing, and timely delivery of seasonal goods to markets (Oladipo & Adeyemi, 2021).

Businesses employ various adaptation strategies to cope with Harmattan-related uncertainties. These include flexible inventory management, diversification of product lines, leveraging real-time climate information, and engaging in collaborative forecasting with suppliers. The effectiveness of these strategies is determined by access to climate data, financial capacity, and managerial skills (Adefolalu, 2018; World Bank, 2022).

2.2 Empirical Review

Adeyeri, Olawumi, and Bello (2020) conducted a comprehensive study examining climate variability and its economic implications for small-scale businesses in Nigeria. The study utilized historical climate data spanning two decades and correlated it with business performance metrics among SMEs operating in diverse sectors. The authors found that variations in seasonal patterns, particularly unexpected shifts in temperature and precipitation, had direct and measurable impacts on business revenue, inventory management, and consumer behavior. One of the key contributions of this study was the identification of a linkage between unpredictable weather events, such as delayed or absent Harmattan seasons, and decreased sales for seasonal goods like winter clothing and respiratory medications. The study highlighted that many businesses lacked adequate contingency planning, relying on historical sales data rather than adaptive strategies, making them highly vulnerable to climatic anomalies. Adeyeri et al. (2020) also provided policy recommendations, suggesting that SMEs should integrate climate risk assessments into operational planning, develop flexible inventory systems, and collaborate with meteorological agencies for timely climate information. This research directly informs the present study by demonstrating that Harmattan variability affects forecasted performance of seasonal goods and that proactive

adaptation can mitigate financial losses. Moreover, it underscores the need for empirical data linking specific seasonal goods to climatic anomalies to guide business forecasting practices.

Makridakis, Wheelwright, and Hyndman (2020) provide a foundational analysis of forecasting methods and their applications, emphasizing the challenges posed by dynamic and unpredictable environments. Their research underscores the limitations of relying solely on historical data when environmental variables, such as climate, introduce variability. The authors examined multiple industries where demand forecasting was critical, including seasonal retail, and highlighted cases where deviations from expected conditions caused significant discrepancies between projected and actual sales. They argued that the accuracy of forecasts is highly sensitive to unanticipated shifts in the underlying factors influencing demand. For seasonal goods in Nigeria, the study implies that businesses depending on predictable Harmattan patterns face similar challenges, as climate variability alters the timing and intensity of consumer demand. The study further explores adaptive forecasting methods, including rolling forecasts, scenario planning, and integration of external environmental data, which are pertinent for businesses facing irregular Harmattan conditions. This work supports the current study by framing forecasted performance as a key independent variable influenced by climatic uncertainty and by emphasizing the importance of incorporating climate considerations into demand projection models.

Adefolalu (2018) investigated the health and environmental implications of the Harmattan season in Nigeria, focusing on how variations in dust and temperature affect human behavior and market activities. Using field surveys, hospital records, and sales data, the study demonstrated that increased dust levels correlate with higher incidences of respiratory illnesses and heightened demand for protective and health-related products, including inhalers and skincare items. Conversely, when the Harmattan season is weak or absent, these demand patterns are disrupted, leading to reduced sales for products that are typically season-dependent. Adefolalu's work highlights the indirect pathways through which climate variability impacts business performance—namely, through consumer health and behavioral responses. The study provides empirical evidence that the forecasted performance of seasonal goods cannot be accurately predicted without accounting for environmental and health-related influences, thereby justifying the inclusion of Harmattan variability as a critical factor in the present research.

Oladipo and Adeyemi (2021) examined the effect of weather disruptions on supply chains in Nigeria, with particular attention to extreme and irregular weather events. The study analyzed logistical performance data, delivery times, and inventory levels of businesses dealing in both perishable and non-perishable goods. Findings revealed that disruptions caused by unanticipated seasonal changes, such as a delayed or absent Harmattan, lead to delayed deliveries, increased operational costs, and shortages of seasonal goods. Businesses that depend on predictable seasonal patterns for stocking and distribution faced significant operational challenges, including stockouts or overstocking. The study highlights the interdependence between environmental conditions and supply chain resilience, demonstrating that accurate forecasting of seasonal goods requires a holistic understanding of both consumer demand and logistical constraints. This empirical evidence aligns with the current study's focus on the impact of Harmattan variability on forecasted performance and operational outcomes.

Kotler and Keller (2019) emphasize the integration of environmental variables into marketing and business planning, arguing that traditional approaches based solely on historical sales patterns are insufficient in dynamic contexts. They advocate for adaptive marketing strategies that incorporate real-time environmental and consumer data to refine demand forecasts. While their work is not specific to Nigeria, the principles are directly applicable: businesses dealing with seasonal goods during the Harmattan season must incorporate climate variability, consumer response, and supply chain flexibility into their forecasting and planning models. Kotler and Keller also discuss segmentation and targeting based on environmental triggers, which is relevant for tailoring stock levels and marketing efforts according to expected climate conditions.

Armstrong (2020) examined forecasting accuracy for seasonal products across multiple industries, concluding that reliance on historical data alone is insufficient when environmental variability is high. The study demonstrated that firms employing adaptive forecasting techniques, such as scenario planning, rolling forecasts, and continuous monitoring of environmental cues, achieved higher forecast accuracy and better operational performance. This study is particularly relevant for seasonal goods in Nigeria, as Harmattan variability introduces unpredictability in consumer demand. Armstrong's research underscores the necessity of integrating climate signals into forecast models to reduce mismatch between expected and actual sales.

The IPCC (2021) provides global evidence on increasing climate unpredictability, including irregular seasonal patterns. Their assessment indicates that extreme weather events and anomalies are becoming more frequent, affecting not only agriculture and health but also commercial activities reliant on seasonal cycles. The report highlights the vulnerability of economies dependent on predictable climatic patterns, offering scientific support for studying the effects of Harmattan variability on business forecast accuracy in Nigeria.

NiMet (2023) reported that the 2025/2026 Harmattan season was notably weak or absent in several regions of Nigeria. The agency documented temperature, humidity, and dust patterns that deviated from

historical averages, impacting consumer behavior and business operations. This recent empirical observation provides direct evidence for the present study, demonstrating how real-time climate anomalies disrupt the forecasted performance of seasonal goods and corroborating findings from previous studies.

The ILO (2022) highlighted the vulnerability of informal sector entrepreneurs to climate variability. Using surveys and case studies, the organization found that limited access to climate information, inadequate financial buffers, and lack of risk management capacity exacerbate the negative impact of unpredictable seasonal events on business performance. These findings support the present study's focus on SMEs and the critical role of forecasted performance as a proxy for business outcomes under changing climatic conditions.

The World Bank (2022) examined economic resilience in sub-Saharan Africa under conditions of climate variability. The report emphasized that irregular seasonal patterns, including disruptions in traditional winter or dry seasons, reduce forecasting accuracy for businesses reliant on predictable environmental cues. It recommended integrating climate risk management into business strategy, highlighting the importance of aligning operational planning with emerging environmental realities. This global perspective reinforces the study's premise that Harmattan variability directly affects forecasted performance and subsequent business outcomes in NigeriaThese studies collectively illustrate the strong linkages between Harmattan variability, forecasted performance of seasonal goods, and business outcomes, thereby providing empirical justification for the present study.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Contingency Theory, proposed by Fiedler (1964). Contingency Theory posits that organizational effectiveness depends on the fit between environmental conditions and managerial strategies. It assumes that no single management or operational strategy is universally effective; instead, the appropriateness of a strategy is contingent upon the situational context.

In the context of this study, the theory suggests that the performance of businesses dealing with seasonal goods depends on how well their forecasting and operational strategies align with changing climatic conditions, specifically the variability or absence of the Harmattan season. Firms that adapt their inventory management, sales forecasting, and supply chain strategies in response to Harmattan variability are more likely to achieve optimal business performance, while those that fail to adjust may suffer losses. The Contingency Theory thus provides a conceptual lens for understanding how climate-induced changes in seasonal patterns influence the forecasted performance of seasonal goods and overall entrepreneurial outcomes.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design to examine the effects of Harmattan season variability on the forecasted performance of seasonal goods in Nigeria. The design is appropriate because it enables the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data from a large number of entrepreneurs, allowing for the description and analysis of real-life business conditions. It facilitates the use of structured questionnaires and interviews to gather data on sales, profitability, inventory practices, and adaptation strategies, thereby establishing relationships between Harmattan variability and business performance. The study population is considered infinite due to the large and continuously expanding number of entrepreneurs involved in seasonal goods such as sweaters, skincare products, respiratory medications, hot beverages, and firewood/charcoal. Using Cochran's formula for infinite populations, a minimum sample size of 384 respondents was determined. To account for non-response, this was increased by 10% to 422 respondents. Stratified random sampling will be used to ensure adequate representation across different categories of seasonal goods.

Primary data was used to collected through structured questionnaires, capturing forecasted and actual business performance, as well as adaptation strategies. Semi-structured interviews will complement the survey to provide deeper insights. The research instrument was pre-tested to ensure clarity and relevance.

The Instrument validity was through expert review, while reliability was through Cronbach's alpha, with a threshold of 0.7 indicating acceptable consistency.

Data analysis was involved descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive tools such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations was to summarize the data. Inferential techniques including Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and ANOVA were used to test relationships and differences among variables.

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 422 questionnaires were distributed to respondents across the selected regions. Out of these, 400 were returned and deemed valid for analysis, resulting in a response rate of approximately 94.8%, which is considered adequate for statistical analysis and generalization of findings.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.2.1 Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	260	65%
Female	140	35%

The data indicate that males dominate the ownership and operation of seasonal goods businesses in the study area, although female participation is significant.

4.2.2 Age Distribution

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
18-30	80	20%
31-45	200	50%
46-60	100	25%
61+	20	5%

The majority of respondents are between 31-45 years, indicating that mid-career entrepreneurs dominate the sector.

4.2.3 Educational Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	50	12.5%
Secondary	150	37.5%
Tertiary	180	45%
Others	20	5%

The data show that most entrepreneurs have attained secondary or tertiary education, suggesting that literacy may influence business planning and forecasting abilities.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Key Variables

4.3.1 Forecasted Performance of Seasonal Goods

Respondents were asked to rate the accuracy of their forecasted sales prior to the 2025/2026 Harmattan season.

Forecast Accuracy	Frequency	Percentage
Highly Accurate	40	10%
Moderately Accurate	120	30%
Inaccurate	200	50%
Very Inaccurate	40	10%

A significant 60% of respondents reported that their forecasted performance was inaccurate, indicating that the absence or irregularity of the Harmattan season significantly disrupted demand expectations.

4.3.2 Sales Performance During Harmattan Season

Seasonal Good	Increased Sales	No Change	Decreased Sales
Sweaters	20 (5%)	40 (10%)	340 (85%)
Skincare	50 (12.5%)	80 (20%)	270 (67.5%)
Respiratory Meds	30 (7.5%)	70 (17.5%)	300 (75%)
Hot Beverages	25 (6.25%)	75 (18.75%)	300 (75%)
Firewood/Charcoal	40 (10%)	60 (15%)	300 (75%)

The majority of respondents experienced decreased sales across all seasonal goods, demonstrating the direct impact of Harmattan variability on forecasted performance and actual business outcomes.

4.3.3 Profitability Impact

Respondents reported that the weak or absent Harmattan season led to: - Overstocking and inventory accumulation - Increased holding costs - Reduced cash flow and profitability

Quantitative analysis indicates that average profits declined by 30-50% compared to previous Harmattan seasons, confirming the financial vulnerability of entrepreneurs to seasonal irregularities.

4.4 Inferential Analysis

4.4.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation was used to examine the relationship between forecasted performance and actual sales performance for seasonal goods.

Variable Pair	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p-value)
Forecasted Performance & Sweater Sales	0.68	0.000
Forecasted Performance & Skincare Sales	0.55	0.000
Forecasted Performance & Respiratory Meds Sales	0.60	0.000
Forecasted Performance & Hot Beverages Sales	0.57	0.000
Forecasted Performance & Firewood/Charcoal Sales	0.65	0.000

The results indicate a strong, positive, and significant correlation between forecasted performance and actual sales for all seasonal goods, highlighting the central role of accurate forecasting in business outcomes.

4.4.2 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to assess the impact of Harmattan season variability on forecasted performance and business profitability.

- **Model Summary:** $R^2 = 0.62$, indicating that 62% of the variation in sales performance can be explained by forecasted performance.
- **ANOVA:** $F(1,398) = 256.4$, $p < 0.001$, confirming the overall significance of the model.
- **Coefficient:** $\beta = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$, indicating that a unit change in forecast accuracy significantly affects sales performance.

This demonstrates that Harmattan season variability significantly influences forecasted performance, which in turn affects profitability and operational efficiency.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The findings reveal revealed as followings: 1. The absence or weak manifestation of the 2025/2026 Harmattan season caused a substantial misalignment between forecasted and actual sales, leading to financial losses across all seasonal goods. 2. The majority of entrepreneurs experienced decreased sales and profitability, indicating high vulnerability to seasonal climate anomalies. 3. Pearson correlation results confirm that accurate forecasted performance is strongly associated with actual sales outcomes, reinforcing the need for adaptive forecasting methods. 4. Regression analysis shows that forecasted performance is a significant predictor of business outcomes, emphasizing that climate variability directly impacts business performance through its effect on forecast accuracy. 5. Qualitative data highlight that entrepreneurs faced challenges such as inventory accumulation, liquidity constraints, and unpreparedness for climate deviations, which corroborates quantitative findings.

Overall, the study confirms that Harmattan season variability is a critical factor influencing the forecasted performance and operational success of seasonal goods businesses in Nigeria. The findings align with previous research emphasizing the importance of adaptive business strategies and climate-informed forecasting for SMEs and informal sector entrepreneurs (Adeyeri et al., 2020; Makridakis et al., 2020; Oladipo & Adeyemi, 2021).

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study investigated the impact of Harmattan season variability on the forecasted performance of seasonal goods in Nigeria, focusing on sweaters, skincare products, respiratory medications, hot beverages, and firewood/charcoal. Data were collected from 400 entrepreneurs, and both descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted. The findings are summarized in line with the study objectives:

1. Objective 1: Analyze the relationship between Harmattan season variability and consumer demand for selected seasonal goods in Nigeria
    - The study found that the absence or weak manifestation of the 2025/2026 Harmattan season caused a significant decline in consumer demand across all seasonal goods.
    - Sweaters experienced the highest decline (85%), followed by respiratory medications, hot beverages, and firewood/charcoal (75%), while skincare products declined by 67.5%.
    - This confirms a direct relationship between Harmattan variability and consumer behavior, highlighting that businesses relying on seasonal expectations were heavily affected.
2. Objective 2: Assess the impact of climateinduced changes in the Harmattan season on the accuracy of business demand forecasting for seasonal goods
    - Approximately 60% of respondents reported that their forecasted performance was inaccurate due to unpredictable Harmattan patterns.
    - Pearson correlation analysis showed strong positive relationships ($r = 0.55–0.68$, $p < 0.001$) between forecasted performance and actual sales, indicating that inaccurate forecasting directly reduced sales performance.
3. Objective 3: Evaluate the effects of Harmattanrelated climate variability on the supply chains and availability of seasonal goods
    - Entrepreneurs reported disruptions in sourcing, transportation, and storage due to unpredictable climatic conditions.
    - Supply chain challenges included delays in product deliveries, deterioration of perishable goods, and logistical inefficiencies, all of which exacerbated inventory management problems.
4. Objective 4: Identify the challenges faced by businesses, particularly SMEs, in forecasting and managing the performance of seasonal goods under changing climatic conditions
    - The study revealed key challenges, including overstocking, increased holding costs, reduced cash flow, and limited capacity to adjust to sudden changes in demand.
    - Small and medium-scale enterprises were particularly vulnerable due to limited financial buffers and inadequate access to climate information.

5. Objective 5: Examine existing adaptation strategies employed by businesses to cope with climaterelated uncertainties during the Harmattan season
    - Few businesses had formal adaptation strategies. Some entrepreneurs attempted to diversify product lines or stagger stock purchases, but most relied on traditional seasonal knowledge.
    - There is a clear need for climate-informed decision-making, dynamic forecasting methods, and capacity-building to improve resilience.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings aligned with the objectives, the study concludes that: Harmattan season variability significantly affects the forecasted performance of seasonal goods. The absence or irregularity of the season disrupted consumer demand, reduced sales, and negatively impacted profitability. Forecast accuracy is a critical determinant of business performance. Businesses that rely solely on historical seasonal patterns are increasingly at risk due to climate-induced anomalies.

5.3 Recommendations

In line with the study objectives, the following recommendations are revealed:

1. Businesses should adopt dynamic, climate-informed forecasting models that integrate meteorological data with historical sales trends to anticipate fluctuations in demand.
2. Entrepreneurs should develop flexible supply chain strategies, including staggered procurement, diversified suppliers, and contingency storage plans to cope with unpredictable seasonality.
3. SMEs should receive training on climate risk management, adaptive business planning, and inventory control, enabling them to adjust quickly to unexpected seasonal variations.
4. Government and agencies like NiMet should provide early warning systems and advisory services to inform businesses of anticipated seasonal changes.
5. Financial institutions should offer climate-resilient credit facilities or insurance products to buffer the financial impact of irregular seasons.

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