

## **Psychological Resilience Factors Associated with Climate Change Adaptations by Subsistence Farmers in a Rural Community, South Africa**

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**Abstract :** Climate change poses a major threat to the well-being of both people and the environment, with subsistence farmers most affected as they rely on local supply systems that are sensitive to climate variation. This study documented psychological resilience factors associated with climate change adaptations by subsistence farmers in Maruleng Municipality, Limpopo Province. A qualitative study was conducted to examine the notions of climate change by subsistence farmers, the psychological resilience factors, the strategies to cope with climate change, adaptation methods, and the development of subsistence farmers' psychological resilience factors model. Data were collected through direct interactions with participants using a grounded theory research design. An open-ended interview was used to collect data with a sample of 15 participants selected through theoretical sampling in Maruleng Municipality. The participants were both Sepedi and Xitsonga speaking from 2 villages, mostly unemployed, pensioners and dependent on social grants. The study included both males and females who were predominately the elderly. The research findings indicate that farmers have limited knowledge of what climate change is and what causes it. Furthermore, the research reflects that although their responses were non-scientific but sensible enough to know what they were dealing with. They mentioned extreme weather, which includes hot days and less rainfall and changes in seasons, as some of the impacts brought by climate change. The results also indicated that participants have learned to adapt through several adaptation strategies, including mulching, changes in irrigation time slots and being innovative. The resilience factors that emerged from the study were a passion for farming, hope, enthusiasm, courage, acceptance/tolerance, livelihood and belief systems. Looking at the socio-economic factors of the current study setting argumentation leads to the conclusion that it is important that government should assist the subsistence farmers as it was observed from the participants that they felt neglected by the government and policymakers as they are small scale farmers and are not included like commercial farmers.

**Keywords :** climate change, psychological resilience factors, human adaptation, subsistence farmers

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