Editor's comments:

This manuscript needs drastic language correction.

Author's feedback:

The following corrections (in red) have been made in the manuscript (But these changes/additions are highlighted yellow in the manuscript attached).

Line 5: ….. effect of soil moisture stress …

Line 10: The experiment comprised …

Line 12: ….. levels (15, 10 and 5%) at all N levels, (comma was removed) were lower …..

Lines 15-16: Subjecting ~~when stress was imposed on~~ rice plants that were supplied with 0 kg N/ha to moisture stress did not significantly ($P > .05$) affect the number of panicles ~~numbers that were~~ produced when compared with ~~by rice plants subjected to moisture stress levels were similar to~~ those of the control.

Line 17: … level, number of panicles ~~numbers~~ produced …

Lines 19-20: …. levels, number of panicles ~~number~~ decreased significantly at all moisture stress levels when ~~as~~ compared ….

Line 24: …. farmers growing Namche-3 rice ….

Line 25: …. apply N at 120 kg ~~N~~/ha if they are to ….

Lines 82-84: Based on ~~that~~ the field capacity of soil, 25% moisture content was ~~selected~~ taken as a control. ~~The layout~~ Layout of the experiment was a completely randomized design in a factorial arrangement with two factors, namely water stress and nitrogen fertilizer as treatments. Each treatment was applied at four levels and replicated three times ~~replicates for each treatment. Two factors, water stress and nitrogen fertilizer levels each at four levels~~.

Lines 85-86: Nitrogen in form of urea (46% N) was applied at rates of zero (control), 40, 80 and 120 kg N/ha ~~and~~ in two split applications. The first 50% of N for all the levels ~~basally~~ was applied two weeks after planting and the other 50% was applied at flowering as ….

Lines 88: …. of potash, respectively at the time of planting ~~time~~ in all the ……..

Lines 88-89: ~~Four soil~~ Soil moisture levels comprised 25% as a control (normal field capacity) and 15, 10 and 5% as stressful moisture levels ~~were applied~~.

Lines 89-91: ~~Outside the stress period~~ During the first two weeks after planting, all treatments received the same amount of water as the control. Thereafter, irrigation treatments were carried out as planned ~~after seedling establishment and were maintained~~ until harvest.

Lines 97-98: Data collected included …. plant height (cm), days to maturity, number of panicles per hill, ~~days to maturity,~~ grain yield (g/m^2), biological yield (g/m^2)~~, unfilled grains (%)~~ and …

Line 112: their interactions (Table 2). Soil moisture ….

Line 112-114: …. effect ($P < .001$) on plant height but ~~their interactions and~~ N levels and their interaction with moisture levels did not (Table 2). ~~When rice plants were subjected to soil moisture stress, there was~~ There were significant variations in plant heights within the soil moisture stress levels~~treatments~~ at each N fertilizer level.

Line 116: ~~In~~ At the 40 kg N/ha level, when Namche-3 was subjected …..

Line 117-118: ….. between the 5 and 15% moisture stress levels, but …….

Line 118-119: The ~~plant~~ heights of plants subjected to the 10% moisture stress level ~~was~~ were similar to ~~that~~ those of the control.

Line 119-121: At 80 kg N/ha, plants ~~when soil moisture treatments were imposed, the treatments~~ that were ~~stressed at~~ subjected to 5 and 10% moisture levels had similar plant heights, and were higher than those of plants subjected to ~~while~~ the 15% moisture level. However, the heights of plants subjected to the 15, 10 and 5% moisture ~~had the lowest plant height, and all~~ were significantly lower than those~~that~~ of the control.

Line 122: case of 120 kg N/ha level, the height of plants subjected to 10 and 5% moisture stress

Line 123: … from each other, but~~though~~ they were lower ($P < .001$) than those~~that~~ of the control.

Line 124: … level, the plant heights were ~~was~~ significantly lower than those~~that~~ of the other …..

Line 133-134: … affected the heights of rice plants under stressful soil moisture ~~treatments~~levels.

Line 144: …. affected due to the deficiency of soil.

Lines 149-150: … growth stages. ~~As the~~ Plant height ~~of the plant~~ is controlled …

Lines 151-152: … However, in order to~~for the full~~ expression ~~of its~~ their full genetic potential, it is better to provide rice plants with necessary …

Line 156-157: …. the treatments of N application and moisture stress levels. There was also significant interaction between N application and moisture levels ($P = .007$) **…….**

Line 158-160: …. of Namche-3 rice cultivar. Generally, subjecting rice plants to moisture stress significantly ($P < .001$) increased the number of days to maturity at all N application levels when compared with the respective control treatments ~~The watering regimes affected the number of days taken by the rice plants to reach maturity~~ (Table 2). ~~Across all treatments, moisture stress significantly ($P < .001$) increased the number of days to maturity.~~

Line 163: ------ periods were longer ($P < .001$) than those ~~that~~ of the control.

Line 165-167: ~~Under~~ At the 40 kg N/ha ~~treatments~~application rate, rice plants subjected to the 10% moisture stress level took ~~had~~ the longer ($P < .001$) ~~number of days~~ to reach maturity, followed by plants that were subjected to 15% moisture stress level. Rice plants that were subjected to~~, while those under~~ 5% moisture level took the shortest number of days to

mature and were similar ….

Line 168: ... for the 10% moisture level were significantly higher than those of the 5% moisture

Line 169-171: At~~For~~ 120 kg N/ha level, rice plants that were subjected to the 15% moisture level and the control took similar number of days to reach maturity, while those 10% level took the highest ($P < .001$) number of days to reach maturity, and were followed by those at the 5%

Line 181: … supplied with 0 kg N/ha, the number panicles ~~panicle numbers~~ for all the …

Line 182: At the~~Under~~ 40 kg N/ha level, number of panicles~~panicle numbers~~ for ….

Line 185: …. and N at 80 kg N/ha, number of panicles ~~panicle numbers~~ for all the stress …

Line 186: The same trend in the reduction of number of panicles~~panicle numbers~~ was ….

Line 190-191: … by Rahman *et al.* [24] who observed a reduction in the number of panicles when rice plants were subjected to~~noted that panicle numbers decreased with~~ soil moisture stress~~ in rice~~.

Line 192: …. the slowdown of cell division that, which in turn led to ….

Line 195: …. reduction in the number of panicles~~panicle number~~ while stress ….

Line 199: …. increased the number of filled grains and number of panicles~~panicle numbers~~.

Line 202: --- yield but N application levels were not significant ($P = .98$) (Table 3).

Line 203: The interaction between N application levels and moisture stress levels …

Line 204: When the~~Namche 3~~ rice plants were …

Line 205: … grain yield at all the N application levels, except that ….

Line 206: ….. the other N application levels.

Line 207: …. than that of the control as well as ~~and~~ those obtained at ….

Line 210: …. grain yields dropped significantly at all ….

Line 212: ….. yields at the 5 and 10% moisture stress levels …

Line 215: …. level, soil moisture~~when~~ stress ~~was imposed,~~caused significant drop in ~~the~~ grain yields when ~~dropped significantly as~~ compared with the control.

Line 217: ….. the one for the 5% soil moisture level was the lowest.

Line 237: … N application treatments and their interaction ($P < .001$). The biological yields at 0 kg N/ha for the 10 and 5% moisture stress …..

Line 238-240: stress levels were significantly higher than that of the control~~, except the one for the 15% moisture level which was similar to that of the control~~ (Table 3). ~~The 5% moisture level obtained highest biological yield, followed by the one at 10% moisture level.~~

Line 240-241: ~~In~~At the ~~case of~~ 40 kg N/ha level, the biological yields for the ~~at~~ 10 and 15% moisture

stress levels were similar but ….

Line 242: of the 5% moisture stress level. At~~For~~ the 80 kg N/ha level, the …

Line 243: …. moisture stress level and was higher than that of the control, while …...

Line 244-246: …. was imposed on rice plants that were supplied with ~~and the~~ 120 kg N/ha~~application rate~~, the biological yield obtained at the 15% moisture stress level was similar to that of the control, and was higher than the yields ~~ose~~ obtained at the 10 and 5% moisture stress levels.

Line 249-250: and the number of grains per spike. Any ~~factor causing~~ change in these components

Lines 252-252: … of Kalamian *et al*. [32] ~~who observed that biological yield was increasingly affected by the water deficit stress and N fertilization levels~~.

Line 267: … by N fertilizer~~ation~~ application (P = .016) and soil moisture

Line 268: ….. soil moisture ~~levels~~ and N fertilizer~~ation~~ application (P = .011).

Line 269: for the moisture stress levels at 0 kg N/ha level…. ~~For~~ At the 40 kg N/ha level, …..

Line 271-272: ….. control. A similar trend was observed at~~For~~ the 80 kg N/ha level~~, harvest indices obtained for all the stressful treatments were also similar but lower than that of the control~~. ~~Exposing Namche-3~~ Subjecting rice …

Line 273: …. and N application rate of 120 kg~~N~~/ha resulted in …

Line 274: …. with the exception of the harvest index for the 5% moisture stress level which was ….

Line 282: ….. Farooq *et al.* [41] reported that, (comma deleted) when ….

Line 283: …. moisture stress, grain yield was severely ~~seriously~~ reduced by ….

Line 287: ~~The~~ In this study, ~~showed that~~ a combination of different doses …..

Line 290: ….. with the control. The ~~study further showed that the~~ average number ….