

Review Form 3

Journal Name:	International Journal of Plant & Soil Science
Manuscript Number:	Ms_IJPSS_128480
Title of the Manuscript:	Morphological Characterization of citrus leaves (Citrus species) under sub-tropical conditions of Punjab
Type of the Article	

General guidelines for the Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guidelines for the Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

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PART 1: Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's Feedback <i>(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.	The manuscript focuses on the morphological characterization of citrus leaves from six different species under the sub-tropical conditions of Punjab. This research is of interest for citrus taxonomy, breeding, and horticulture.	
Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title)	The title is specific but could be more engaging to highlight the significance of the research (e.g., "Comparative Morphological Characterization of Citrus Leaves under Sub-tropical Conditions").	
Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.	The abstract lacks cohesion. Redundant phrases (e.g., "randomly collected...") should be removed, and results should be summarized more succinctly.	
Is the manuscript scientifically, correct? Please write here.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The claim in the abstract that "there was no significant variation morphological characterization among citrus leaves" contradicts the results section, which reports variations in several traits. This discrepancy needs resolution. Statistical details are insufficient. If the heat map is integral to the analysis, include a detailed description of its results and how they support the findings. Otherwise, consider removing its mention to avoid confusion. Comparisons with past studies are limited to a few traits and not critically analyzed. Incorporating insights from recent morphological and molecular studies could enhance the discussion. Phrases and sentences closely match those in cited references, particularly Singh et al. (2010) and Khan et al. (2008). While the authors cite these works, paraphrasing or using original wording is necessary. The description of sample collection is repetitive and unclear. For example, the phrase "Samples were randomly collected from 10 leaves samples which were randomly collected from 5 plants" needs restructuring. Details about orchard management and experimental conditions (e.g., soil type, irrigation) are lacking. The software used for statistical analysis (SPSS) is outdated (version 15.0), and its use should be justified or updated. Table 1 and Table 2 lack comprehensive captions. Units are inconsistently reported (e.g., mm, cm²). Figures, if any, are missing; visual aids such as heat maps mentioned in the methodology could be included for better understanding. 	
Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference formatting is inconsistent. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Benavente-Garcia and Castillo (2008)" should include proper journal abbreviations. URLs and access dates for online references should be included. The literature review does not cite recent advances in citrus morphology or molecular studies (e.g., after 2020). 	

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<p>Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The manuscript contains several grammatical errors, awkward phrasing, and typographical mistakes. For instance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "An field experiment" should be "A field experiment." ○ "Leaves samples" should be "Leaf samples." ○ "The experimental results revealed that there were significant variations for morphological characterization in different citrus species" should be rephrased for conciseness and clarity. • Punctuation errors are widespread (e.g., missing commas, inconsistent use of brackets, etc.). 	
<p>Optional/General comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction contains redundant information (e.g., the "third largest fruit crop" is mentioned twice). • The botanical and economic importance of citrus is well-stated but needs further linkage to the study's objectives. • Clarify the random sampling process and sample size. • Provide details about the statistical tests performed (e.g., significance levels, assumptions). • Justify the selection of the six citrus species. • Qualitative and quantitative traits should be discussed separately for clarity. • While variations in leaf traits are attributed to "environment and genotype interaction," this needs elaboration with supporting references. • Discuss why certain species exhibit specific morphological traits under the studied conditions. • The conclusion is overly simplistic and fails to connect findings to broader applications. • Suggestions for future research, such as incorporating molecular markers or extending the study to other climatic zones, should be included. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the manuscript thoroughly for grammar and clarity. 2. Expand the discussion to critically evaluate results in the context of previous studies. 3. Incorporate more recent references to highlight the relevance of the study. 4. Add visual aids such as figures and a properly labeled heat map to complement the data. <p>PLEASE SEE ATTACHMENT</p>	

PART 2:

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
<p>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</p>	<p><i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i></p>	

Reviewer Details:

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