

Assessment of Factors Causing Lack of Interest among Small-Scale Farmers in Agriculture System in Tehsil Shakargarh, Pakistan

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Abstract

This study aimed to highlight the factors that enforce the small-scale farmers to take the least interest in agricultural activities. The study showed the destructive effects of factors like socio-economic, techno-economic, Government policies, Natural disasters and all those factors that are major obstacles in minimizing their low production. The data was collected from 110 respondents from Tehsil Shakargarh by using multi-stage random sampling technique. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to interpret the data. The study showed that neither Small-scale farmers in Tehsil Shakargarh are ready to take care of their full monetary expenses nor to create their income because of low cash costs. Their output is much less than from their investment, which took away the entire livelihood from them and made them more vulnerable. The study also put some light on extension department role in creating awareness among small farmers. Proper steps should be taken to narrow these problems.

Keywords: Small-scale farmers, socio-economic problems, Natural Problems, Techno-economic problems, Financial Problems, Advisory Services.

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INTRODUCTION

Food and Agriculture Organization (2014-15) mention Pakistan as an Agriculture nation whose more than 3/4 of the population lives in the rustic segment and is exceedingly subject to an agricultural framework. While according to the Economic Survey of Pakistan (2014-15), agriculture sector accounts about 43.5% occupation. It comprises of both subsistence farmers and vast landholders. Subsistence farmers are the backbone of agriculture but they did not get worth concentration in the policies made by Government side and in the allocating budget. Gauthier et al. (2001) revealed in their study that small-scale farmers everywhere throughout the world face various difficulties with normal measurements.

The development of agriculture sector in Pakistan is confronting numerous problems due to poor infrastructure as compared to villages. Because of various reasons, the average yield per acre is low in Pakistan rather industrial countries. The small-scale farmers face many challenges to amplify their production for getting the sensible benefit and entire satisfaction. The United Nations Human Development Programme, (2015) demonstrated that the aggregate population in Pakistan is 18 billion at a yearly development rate of 2.7. According to Food and Agriculture Organization's

(FAO) report (2014-15), the rural population (62.45%) plays an important role in the agriculture sector while International Fund for Agricultural Development(IFAD) reported in 2011 that nearly 3/4 of the world's population live in rural areas, the majority of which are youngsters and children. FAO also revealed in the same report that the aggregate territory of Pakistan is about 79.6 million hectares, out of which just 23.7 million hectares land region (30%) utilized for agricultural purposes. Remaining 70% zone is inoperative and un-used and need to be focus upon. Ejaz et al. (2014) described in their study that the dynamic farmers would probably receive any sort of advancement or innovation in view of accessible assets and other sought inputs. There are infinite sub-division and discontinuity of area possessions; therefore, advanced innovation and current technology cannot make a difference in the agriculture sector.

District Narowal - on the Pak-India Border, is one of the remotest and most dejected district of Punjab. The city is arranged on the bank of Ravi stream around 4-5 km from the Indian border. The locale lives from 31.55° to 32.30° North latitude and 74.35° to 75.21° East longitudes. The region is bound on the Northwest by Sialkot area, on the North by Jammu State, on the East by Gurdaspur district (India) and on the south by Amritsar district (India) and

Sheikhupura region. District Narowal (Punjab, Pakistan) has three Tehsils to be specific Narowal, Zafarwal and Shakargarh. The study was directed at Tehsil Shakargarh, a very fertile area of Pakistan. One of the salient features of its geographical location is that sunrays first fall on this area and Pakistan's Standard Time has been measured using it as a reference. The exact location that is taken as time reference lies at Village Inayat Pur Grotta, situated near the town Ikhlas Pur. Numerous staple crops like rice, wheat and some of the pulses are also grown there. Another salient feature about which majority of Pakistanis are unaware is that Ravi River first enters in Pakistan at this Tehsil and after which it enters in India again and then Pakistan near Lahore

This paper summarizes the perception of small-scale farmers, which bring about their least interests in agriculture. This paper evolves the perspectives of small-scale farmers how socially, economically, Techno-economically and Natural disasters like floods, earthquakes etc. affect their productivity as well as create other issues for them.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to collect the primary data, the sample respondents were personally interviewed. It was essential to winning the confidence and cooperation of the respondents before collecting the necessary data. Therefore, the respondents were first facilitated and the objectives of the study were explained to them because village people consider such interviews with suspicion. After completion of data and required information, the data were transferred into an SPSS sheet. The percentages and averages were worked out for discussions and interpretations of the results.

An interview schedule was developed for data gathering from the sampled respondents. It contained questions related to farmers, their problems in the agriculture sector, the role of advisory services moreover reasons for taking least interest in agriculture system was highly emphasized in the questionnaire. A sample size of 110 farmers was chosen from two union councils (Khanowal and Maingri). In 1st stage selection of two UCs was made. On 2nd stage, from each 2 selected UCs 8 villages were chosen and on 3rd stage respondents from selected villages were made. The data were collected through personal interview, which was pre-tested earlier for latest data collection. Primary data were collected and the data were processed and evaluated with the assistance of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 20.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The problems discussed in this paper are categorized into four major groups i.e. socio-economic, techno-economic, financial, and natural after pre-testing the measuring instruments. Besides these, non-availability of

adequate extension services is also one of the major obstacles which reduce the interest of small-scale farmers. The evaluation of the demographic profile is the primary objective of this study that includes various other factors like age, education, experience, landholding area etc.

Age

Our results showed that the most of the respondents were from 31-40 years having 34% in this study (Figure 1).

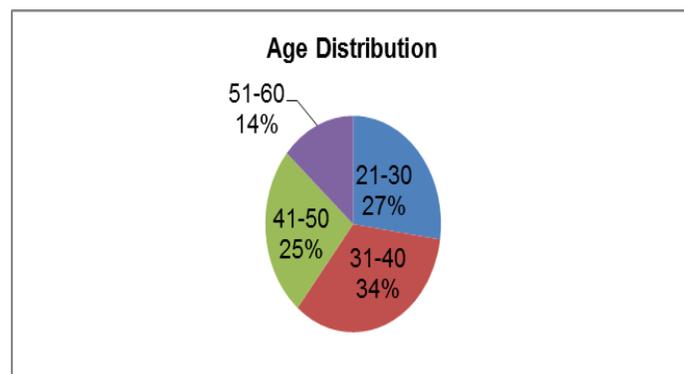


Fig.1. Age Distribution of Respondents

Literacy Status of Sample Respondents

The overall literacy rate of Shakargarh is above 90% that is the second rank Tehsil after Tehsil Taxila and our results showed that only 8% respondents were illiterate (Figure 2).

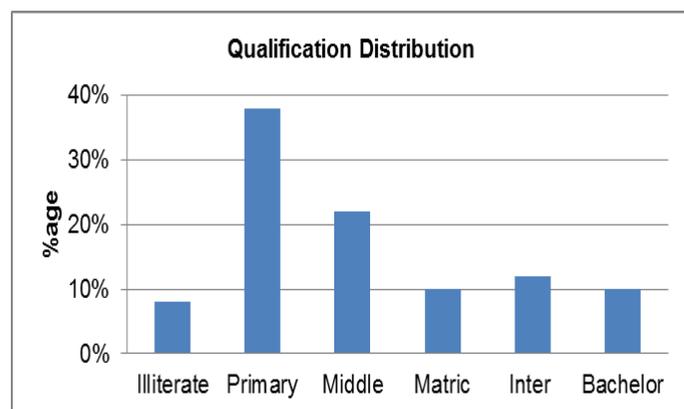


Fig. 2. Qualification Distribution of Respondents

Experience Analysis

About 44% respondents of study were having experience between 11-20 years (Figure 3). Jin (2010) specified in his study that experience assumes a fundamental part in the embracing of innovation.

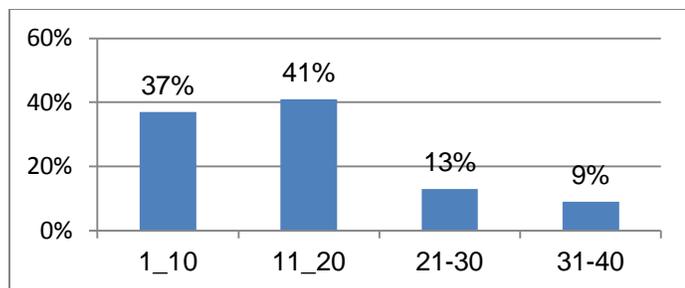


Fig. 3. Experience Distribution of Respondents

Proprietorship

The entire study based on small land holders; owned maximum 15 acres land. In this study, about 70 percent respondents have their own land, 16% farmers use agriculture land of other people while 14% people who perform agricultural activities with other farmers having large landholders (Figure 4).

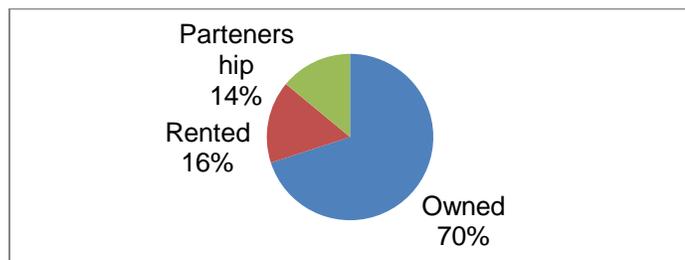


Fig. 4. Land holding Status

Socio-economic Issues of the Farmers

The results of this study showed that Joint Family System got highest mean score 4.08 (Table 1). The sole person has to feed a big family in the joint family system; it was hard to manage the income and expenditures for the entire family. The discussed problems are ordered in descending order with respect to their mean value. Din (2011) concluded in his study that high expenses create instability among the small farmers in receiving new technology. While Economic Survey of Pakistan demonstrates that literacy rate of urban is prominent that is 73.2% rather in rural areas with 49.2%. In socio-economic problems, farming community faces issues socially and economically like consumption oriented, confliction with farmers, joint family system, and problems related to health and education, lack of good quality seed and using traditional or orthodox methods of agriculture. Our farmers lack proper records of their income and expenses. A huge part of the farmer's salary expended on family events like birth, fatality, wedding, and several other cultural, religious, social ceremonies etc. In farmer's conflictions, there are persistent suits among the farming group either directly or by implication. They have to appear in the police stations, irrigation departments, revenue boards, courts and other

authority issues twice or thrice a month. Because of revealed issues, a farmer cannot dedicate his time and strength to the agricultural production. In addition, a large portion of the farmers, workers, and inhabitants in our country lack appropriate skills and are incompetent in increasing the agricultural output.

Joint family system is likewise a major issue in this segment. Most of the farming community is instable; moreover, the farmer needs to bolster his huge family. A farmer lives from hand to mouth, which creates an inadequacy in money saving and investment. A major portion of farmer's profitability devoured at his own particular house.

Table 1. Socio-Economic Problems

Items	N	Mean	St. Deviation
Joint Family System	110	4.08	0.87
Consumptions Oriented	110	3.75	0.95
Illiteracy	110	3.60	1.47
Illness	110	3.78	1.56
Farmers Conflictions	110	2.18	1.00

*Mean Score 1: Not at all 2: To some extent, 3: Moderate, 4: High, 5: Very High

Financial Problems

Our results showed that farmers failed to get an appropriate return from their output (Table 2). Therefore, they remain disappointed and depressed. Jayachandran (2006) revealed in his thesis that low daily wages fluctuations would not be helpful for the poor if they were not earning compensation in incline times. It is a universal saying in regards to our ranchers that "he conceived in obligations, lives in obligations and bites the dust in obligations". It implies that budgetary position of Pakistani farmer is instable. As revealed by "Pakistan Human Development Report 2013", about 60% labour force is working for medieval rulers on less daily compensation. Farming Community in overall Pakistan is deprived of many facilities and also having low level of pay. Credit that facilitates the farmer is not accessible effortlessly. Moreover, non-institutional sources are accessible; nevertheless these are not solid because of the high rate of premium. The marketing value of agricultural items mostly stays temperamental in the country. Pashigian (1991) explained the term "Cobweb Theorem" in his book which is extremely prevalent in the account of marketing sector; it implies that a cost of one product is much sky scraping in this year and much stumpy in the coming year and vice-versa. Agri-credit services are not adequate in Pakistan. As indicated by "Pakistan Human Development Report by United Nations (2013)", about 52.6% small farmers procured from landowners/banks at an extremely higher rate of premium.

Table 2. Financial Problems of Farmers

Items	N	Mean	St. Deviation
Low Daily Wages	110	4.18	0.78
Price of Agri-products	110	3.94	1.45
Marketing Price	110	3.24	1.41
Nonavailability of credits	110	3.08	1.23

*Mean Score: 1: Not at all 2: To some extent, 3: Moderate, 4: High, 5: Very High

Natural Problems

In the conducted study farmers also suffered from natural problems as shown in the table 3 that the diseases, insect, pest attack got maximum mean score 3.96. Natural inconveniences like floods and massive earthquake hurts a ton to the farming community. Zulqarnain (2013) revealed in his study that all the way through the past two decades, natural disasters have taken life of millions of people, adversely affected the lives of as a minimum 1 billion natives, and resulted in significant monetary expenses. Almost all agricultural crops hit by insects, Pests and Plant diseases which lessen the per annum yield of agriculture. Along these lines, the development of agriculture governed by nature. In such situation, if there is heavy rain; it results in lessening the profitability. These affect the decrease in profitability because of unnecessary rain and unfavorable climatic circumstances in Pakistan.

Table 3. Natural Problems

Items	N	Mean	St. Deviation
Diseases/Insect/Pest Attack	110	3.96	0.64
Flood/ Earthquake disasters	110	3.22	0.88
Water Scarcity	110	2.52	1.18

*Mean Score: 1: Not at all 2: To some extent, 3: Moderate, 4: High, 5: Very High

Techno-Economic Problems

One of the major problems, which affect the subsistence farmers, is that they occupy less land area. Policies made by the Government side are mostly in the favor of large landholders and these two problems getting maximum mean score of 4.08 and 3.90 respectively (Table 4). Poor Farming community is using substandard seeds due to non-availability of premium seeds. Agricultural yield is worst affect as lack of superior class of seeds. Farmers are not interested in using the latest means of farming; in a result, the useful fertile land is converting into the barren land. An essential issue of farming is its low output per acre for almost every major crop. However, in the other countries of the world, they are getting a higher yield per acre because of modern technology and trained labor force. Water logging and salinity both are twin problems of this segment; because of salinity, deposits of salt in that area shown up on the surface of the land, as well as they have antagonistically

influenced the advancement of the agricultural sector. It is not the only misuse of an area but also induction in productivity.

Table 4. Techno-Economic Problems

Items	N	Mean	St. Deviation
Less land holding Area	110	4.08	0.74
Agri-Policies	110	3.90	0.90
Agri Production	110	3.58	1.10
Yield	110	3.56	0.84
Selling better price than agriculture	110	2.52	0.66

*Mean Score1: Not at all 2: To some extent, 3: Moderate, 4: High, 5: Very High

Infrastructure

Advisory services in Tehsil Shakargarh have least accessible by Public sector, which is 16% while 30% people have no access to any advisory services. They gain no information by any of the advisory services. Private sector (54%) is prominent in delivering proper services to the farmers (Figure 5).

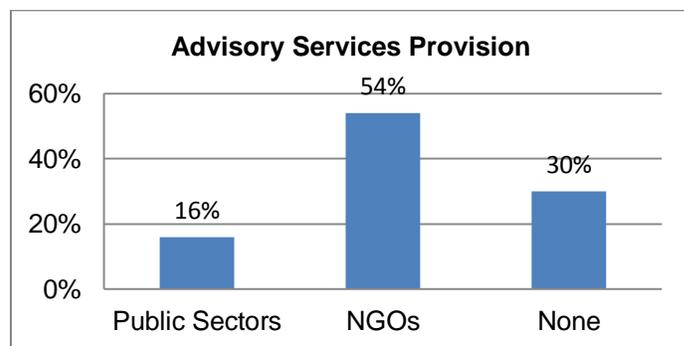


Fig. 5. Provision of Advisory Services

Because of expanding populace and division of land area under the law of legacy, landholding is sub-isolated repeatedly from grandfather to father and from father to his progeny and so on. These results in numerous farmers having under 2 hectares of land. These outcomes in the huge number of ranchers have under 2 hectares of the land. In addition, the property is scattered. The use of modern technology on small land area is also a difficult to operate. Rural infrastructure like: transport, Power (electricity), roads, storage facilities, formal and informal education, cleanliness, and health facilities etc. is deficient in meeting the prerequisite of the advancement of agriculture. The aggregate lengths of the farm-to-market sector, the roads are the shorter as well as poor. Numerous villages have no metallic roads by any means. Electricity is available to only¼ rural populaces.

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

In spite of an agricultural country, the agriculture segment of Pakistan's economy is still backward. The utilization of present day methods, procurement of credit amenities, elementary base, and agriculture exploring centers required to evacuate every one of the issues of this sector. People are using orthodox way of cultivation rather modern technology. The high yield variety seeds are not available to the small farmers. Numerous land reforms needed for the betterment of agriculture sector.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

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