



A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR LOW PRODUCTION PER ACRE IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN DISTRICT GUJRAT

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture is foundation of Pakistan's economy. It accounts for 21% of the Gross Domestic Product and it carries 80% of the country's total export earnings along with agro-based products. More than 48% of the labour force is engaged in this sector as well. Punjab has almost 29% of the total 57% of the total cultivated area. It has 69% of the total cropped area of Pakistan and contributes a major share in the agricultural economy of the country by providing it about 83% of cotton, 80% of wheat, 97% fine aromatic rice, 63% of sugarcane and 51% of maize to the national food production. Apart from all, this sector in Pakistan is also facing some of the most serious issues and there is a need to highlight and solve these issues at first priority.

The present study was carried in District Gujrat Punjab Pakistan. The major objective of the study was to find out various factors causing low production per acre in agricultural sector in Punjab. The universe of the present study consisted of rural areas of Tehsil Kharian District Gujrat. Target population was the land holding farmers who have small size of landholding. Convenient sampling technique was used to select 200 respondents. Interview schedule was used to collect data from 200 farmers.

The study explored that poverty; less use of modern technology and lack of awareness were the major factors that were responsible for low level of production per acre in agricultural sector.

KEYWORDS: Agriculture, Cultivated Area, Serious Issues, Poverty

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan is an agricultural country and agriculture is backbone of the economy of Pakistan. There are various factors that are responsible for the low level of production in agriculture sector due to this per acre yield is very low as compared to other developed countries. Agriculture has been the major occupation of the people of Pakistan.

The agriculture sector in Pakistan is facing serious problems. Here are some key factors that are responsible mainly for low production in per acre yield:

Costly Fertilizers and Pesticides

In Pakistan the prices of the fertilizers are high and due to the increase in the prices of the natural gas and

monopoly of the fertilizer companies working in Pakistan, poor farmers are unable to use them in order to get maximum production (Daily Nation, 2012). The increase in the gas prices has a direct effect on the per bag price of every fertilizer especially urea which is being deliberately used in the agricultural sector (Dawn, 2013). Due to the increase in the prices of these fertilizers an average farmer fails to give his best on the farm and in turn low yield cause the financial pressure and other problems (FAO, 2004).

Water Shortage and Natural Disasters

Pakistan is facing the problem of water shortage and is considered as water-deficit country (Kahlown & Majeed, 2003). Almost 90% provision of water to Pakistani crops is provided by Indus River. Over population is also an other serious problem and it will rise to 250 Million by 2025 which will ultimately drop down the per capita availability of water (Bhutta, 1999). There is controversy over Baglihar Dam between India and Pakistan and a shortage of 70 Million tons of food is expected following 2025. It is the big issue for the agriculture sector of Pakistan.

Load Shedding

Pakistani agriculture sector is also influenced by load shedding. Almost 1,075,073 tube wells (Government of Pakistan. 2011) are the source of irrigation for the land and owing to short fall, these tube wells fail to work in a functional manner. The alternate source to run the tube wells is diesel but the prices of diesel are higher which posed another big problem for the farmers of the country. The unannounced load shedding can disturb the sowing of different crops (Daily Nation, 2008).

Poor Services

The extension services play an important role for the development of agricultural sector. But in Pakistan, these services are very poor and insufficient that are not based on modern technology (Sadaf et al., 2005). The developing countries are unable to transfer the technology to the level of farmers (Government of Malawi, 2000) and this situation is getting worse day by day (Eicher, 2001).

Bad System of Reforms Regarding Land

In Pakistan, the system of Land reforms refer to the government backed changing in the law and regulations for the transfer of ownership of agricultural land evenly in the whole state (Kinsey, 1999). Because of the absence of the laws and land reforms, the farmer based incentives given by the government are enjoyed by big landlords and the poor farmers with the small land holding suffer in the end (Haq, 2012) and the absence of these land reforms is also causing negative changes in the society and these are resulting poverty and the negative behavior in society (IRINEWS, 2009).

Lack of Quality Seed and Insecticides

Quality seed has a major effect on the production as well as the overall vigor of the plant especially in the case of wheat which is considered as the staple food in Pakistan. Provincial Seed Corporations are intended to distribute the quality seed. Owing to the lack of certified seeds, misguidance by many local seed distributors and low quality seed the agriculture sector is suffering from low production per unit area. Non Availability of quality seed is one of the major problems in modern agricultural context in Pakistan (Alam and Naqvi, 2003) and although the government of Pakistan claimed that it controlled the pesticide adulteration and decreased it to 1% but inspite of this, there is a continuous trend of using low quality insecticides (Daily Times, 2012) Bad quality insecticides affect the environment and also induce some of the

serious health issues due to their prolonged residual effects (Jabbar and Mallick, 1994). Moreover, there has been a dearth of the good quality insecticides and the market is dominated by the business of the adulterated or expired insecticides which in turn are detrimental for the overall economic progress and the sustainable agriculture in Pakistan (Dawn, 2013).

Traditional Methods of Farming

Pakistani agriculture is still using the conventional farming practices which have an owner yield as compared to the modern practices. It is a great hindrance to replace the conventional methods with modern ones (Feder, 1985) and these traditional practices are very common in the developing countries such as Pakistan and these practices are mainly due to the smaller farm size as the small level peasant is unable to bear the farm expenses and result in low yield per unit area (Khwaja, 2013).

No Access to Main Market

The third man interference is also one of the major hurdles in improving the socio economic status of the small land holders (Khan, 2010). So the farmers are unable to get the real price of his hard work and inputs. The small farmers are not able to access the market and get the rate that is the original price of the commodity (Malik et al, 1989)

Lack of Modern Technologies

This is the major problem in the way of high production in Pakistan. The farmers don't use modern methods of technology to get maximum production (Shah and Farooq, 2000)

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A Sociological Study of the Factors responsible for low production per acre in Agricultural Sector in District Gujrat Punjab Pakistan.

Theoretical Framework

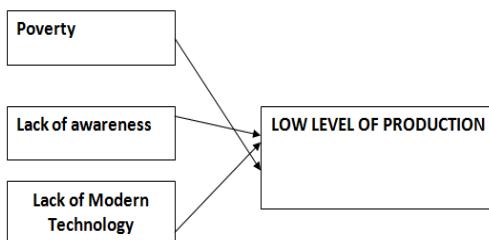


Figure 1

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Are Impure seeds, High cost of fertilizers, Less Use of pesticides and less use of modern technology responsible for low production in per acre?
- Do natural disasters affect the level of production?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To investigate various factors causing and low level of production in agricultural sector.
- To suggest some valuable measures for the improvement of agriculture sector.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was carried in District Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. The major objective of the study was to find out various factors causing low production per acre in agricultural sector in Punjab. The universe of the present study consisted of rural areas of Tehsil Kharian District Gujrat. Target population was the land holding farmers who have small size of landholding. Data was collected from common farmers. Convenient sampling technique was used to select 200 respondents. Interview schedule was used to collect data from 200 farmers. The interviewing schedule was used as appropriate tool to get the required information. It was developed in the light of the objectives of the study and questions were asked in local language from the farmers. Simple Percentage The test-statistic to use is as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

O = Observed value/frequency

E = Expected Value/frequency

\sum = Total sum

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Item No 1: According to the Opinion of the Respondents, the Main causes of Less Production in per Acre

Table 1

		Frequency	Percentage
Main causes of less production in per acre	Impure seeds	40	20%
	High cost of fertilizers	76	38%
	Less Use of pesticides	24	12%
	Less use of modern technology	60	30%
	Total	200	100%

This table documented the respondents' feedback regarding the question "According to your opinion what are the main causes of less production in per acre". The results of above table and graph showed that the majority of the respondents 38 % pointed out the high cost of fertilizers.

Item No 2: Natural Disasters like Heavy Rain, Affect the Production

Table 2

		Frequency	Percentage
Natural disasters affect your crops	Yes	152	76%
	No	48	24%
	Total	100	100%

This table showed the respondents' feedback regarding the question "Natural disasters affect your crops? Like heavy rain, floods". The results of above table and graph show that the majority of the respondents 76% are being affected by the natural disasters. This means that they need proper protection from natural disasters.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Analysis and interpretation of data are the most important steps for conducting scientific social research. Without these steps, generalization and prediction cannot be achieved which is the basic need in social research.

Impure seeds, High cost of fertilizers, Less Use of pesticides, less use of modern technology and natural disasters were the major indicators of the study responsible for low production in per acre.

CONCLUSIONS

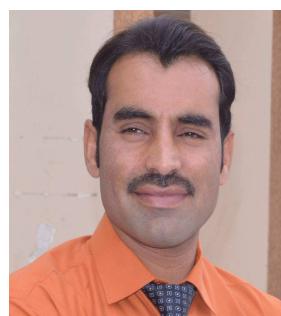
The current research study and its findings show that Impure seeds, High cost of fertilizers, Less Use of pesticides, less use of modern technology and natural disasters were the major indicators of the study responsible for low production in per acre.

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