

## *Short Communication*

# **Agro-economic and Social Constraints Faced by the Small Farmers: A Study of Tehsil Faisalabad (Pakistan)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study was carried out to a) investigate the agro-economic and social conditions of the farmers, b) see the relationship between different agro-economic and social variables, and c) suggest some measures to improve the agro-economic and social conditions of the farmers in Tehsil Faisalabad. The problems of quality of fertilizer, low prices of crops, and relationship between the water shortage, transportation and per acre wheat production have been discussed. Suggestions to overcome the problems have also been given.

**Key Words:** Agro-economic constraints; Social constraints; Farmers; Pakistan

## **INTRODUCTION**

Pakistan has an excellent climate and natural resource base for agriculture. The very warm summers and moderate winters provide two growing seasons for many crops and the topography throughout the country provides ideal conditions for variety of agricultural crops. Size of land holding in Pakistan is very small and has decreased over time. According to Agricultural Census, there are 5.1 million farms in the country and 93% of these are small and marginal farms accounting for 60% of the total cultivated area (GOP, 2002-03).

Low agricultural productivity is due to the fact that idea of modern technology is not fully routinized. Adoption of modern technology is linked with behavioral change. Human behavior regarding acceptance or rejection of any innovation is mainly defined by socio-economic, cultural and personal factors (Roger, 1983)

Agriculture today is getting more and more capital intensives. Capital is required for the purchase of improved seed, fertilizer, pesticides, farm implements and farm machinery. Therefore, capital is considered as a pre-requisite for agricultural development (Idrees & Ibrahim, 1993). According to a study sponsored jointly by FAO and Pakistan's Ministry of Food, agriculture and Livestock, wheat yields would rise by 50% if the practices of the progressive farmers were widespread (F.A.O. 1995).

This study was carried out to a) investigate the agro-economic and social conditions of the farmers, b) see the relationship between different agro-economic and social variables, and c) suggest some measures to improve the agro-economic and social conditions of the farmers in Faisalabad.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Two union councils of Tehsil Faisalabad, i.e., 199 R.B. Gatwala and 201 R.B. Bagehwala was the universe of the present study. Simple random sample technique was used for the selection of the respondents. The sample consisted of 165 respondents.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Majority (57.6%) of the respondents faced the problem of quality of fertilizer to some extent, 26.1% respondents had faced the problem of quality of fertilizer to great extent and 16.4% respondents had not faced the problem of quality of fertilizer. As far as price is concerned majority (73.9%) of the respondents had faced the problem of low prices of crops to great extent, 21.8% respondents had faced the problem of low prices of crops to some extent and there were only 4.2% respondents who had not faced the problem of low prices of crops.

There was a strong relationship between the water shortage and per acre production of wheat. It was found that with an increase in water shortage, per acre production of wheat decreased (Table I). Likewise, an increase in the problem of transportation decreased per acre wheat production (Table II). Wheat production, however, had an increasing trend with an increase in the crop price (Table III).

## **SUGGESTIONS**

- Farmer should be properly trained and the technology transfer system should be improved so

**Table I. Association between the problem of water shortage and per acre production of wheat**

Problem of water shortage	Per acre production of wheat in maunds				Total
	No cultivation	High (40+)	Medium (21—39)	Low (below20)	
To great extent	3 (7.0%)	1 (2.3%)	29 (67.4%)	10 (23.3%)	43 (26.1%)
To some extent	1 (1.1%)	9 (9.5%)	42 (44.2%)	43 (45.3%)	95 (57.6%)
Not at all	1 (3.7%)	3 (11.1%)	11 (40.7%)	12 (44.4%)	2 (16.4v)
Total	5 (3.0%)	13 (7.9%)	82 (49.7%)	65 (39.4%)	165 (100.0%)

Chi square =13.408; df=6; p=.037\*

**Table II. Association between the problem of transportation and per acre production of wheat**

Problem of transportation	Per acre production of wheat in maunds				Total
	No cultivation	High (40+)	Medium (21—39)	Low (below20)	
To great extent	2 10.5	4 21.1	9 47.4	4 21.1	19 11.5
To some extent	1 1.3	5 6.3	44 55.0	30 37.5	80 48.5
Not at all	2 3.0	4 6.1	29 43.9	31 47.0	66 40.0
Total	5 3.0	1 7.9	82 49.7	65 39.4	165 100.0

Chi square =12.662; df=6; p=.045\*

**Table III. Association between the low prices of crops in market and per acre production of wheat**

Problem of low prices of crops	Per acre production of wheat in maunds				Total
	No cultivate	High (40+)	Medium (21—39)	Low (below20)	
To great extent	4 (3.3%)	7 (5.7%)	54 (44.3%)	57 (46.7%)	122 (73.9%)
To some extent	- (0.0%)	6 (16.7%)	23 v63.9%)	7 (19.4%)	36 (21.8%)
Not at all	1 (14.3%)	- (0.0%)	5 (71.4%)	1 (14.3%)	7 (4.2%)
Total	5 (3.0%)	13 (7.9%)	82 (49.7%)	65 (39.4%)	165 (100.0%)

Chi square =18.101; df=6; p=.006\*

that the ordinary farmers might be aware of recommended agricultural practices

- Farmers should be facilitated by providing interest free loans and subsidies on various agricultural inputs for better crop production.
- Canal system should be improved and canal water should be provided to the tail ends to address the water shortage problem.
- Quality of various pesticides and fertilizers should be improved and their prices should be controlled as well
- Minimum price of seeds of every crop should be fixed so that common farmers who cannot store their crop purchase it easily
- Prices of crops in market should be maintained so that the farmers get enough money to increase their production

- Extension department should perform its role more effectively.

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