

Agricultural decline in Pakistan and how to counter it

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Outline

1. Introduction

Thesis statement: Agricultural decline is increasingly happening in Pakistan. Therefore, it requires pragmatic approach to counter it.

2. Decoding Key Term Agricultural Decline

3. Causes of Agricultural Decline In Pakistan

3.1, Real estate developments on agricultural lands

3.2, Insufficient water supplies

3.3, Natural disasters destroying fertile lands

- Floods 2022, wildfires

3.4, Climate change bringing untimely rains

- change in rain patterns

- exacerbating monsoons

3.5, Poorly equipped National Disasters management Authority

3.6, Lack of innovation in Pakistan

3.7, Outdated agricultural practices

- over watering fields

- premature harvesting

3.8, Lack of agricultural research in Pakistan

3.9, Lack of skilled labour in Pakistan

4. Ways Forward To Counter Agricultural Decline In Pakistan.

4.1, Legislation for halting

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real estate developments on agricultural lands.

4.2, Constructing dams for ~~providing~~ meeting water requirements

4.3, Strengthening disasters management capabilities

4.4, Adopting drip irrigation method

4.5, Conducting researchs for enhancing production

4.6, Teaching skills for skilled labour

5. Conclusion

Essay

In the status quo, Pakistan is confronted with series of challenges. Among these challenges - agricultural decline is the prominent one. Pakistan, a so called agrarian economy, is experiencing an agricultural decline. The causes for the decline are real estate developments taking place on agricultural lands, increasing water shortages during time of need, devastating natural disasters and poorly equipped disasters management authorities. All

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of these have added to the increasingly happening agricultural decline. Nevertheless, the agricultural decline can be handled properly, if pragmatic approach is adopted towards it. The way forward requires enactments for stopping real estate developments on agro land, construction of dams for meeting water needs, strengthening natural disasters management for stopping and minimizing the damage and conducting agro based research in Pakistan. By adopting the above-mentioned strategies, the agricultural decline in Pakistan can be countered and rightly handled. The essay will discuss the agricultural decline in Pakistan, reasons for it, and will provide with policy prescriptions to counter it timely.

~~It is pertinent~~ Understanding the key term agricultural decline is simple; it is the downward trend of agricultural production, shrinking share of agriculture to the gross domestic product of Pakistan, and the deterioration of the quality of the agricultural products.

One wonders why ?

country like Pakistan, where agriculture is understood to be the backbone of economy, is facing agricultural decline? The answer to the question lies in the following causes. Firstly, the real estate developments taking place on agricultural lands are making the decline inevitable. Increasing population of Pakistan requires around 0.5 million houses a year. This requirement is mainly fulfilled by the real estate developers and housing schemes. (Pakistan ministry of housing and planning) All of these developments take place on fertile agro lands. This results in decreasing decrease of production, and the pace at which these real estate developments are taking place is alarming for agricultural future of Pakistan.

Secondly, insufficient water supplies during the times of need is also adding to the agricultural decline of Pakistan. Agriculture requires sufficient amount of water supply, but due to minimal number of dams in Pakistan - the disruptions in supply remain. The un-

availability of water during the times of need results in

poor quality of products, or destroys the crops sometime.

The water sharing formulas in Pakistan, too, remain controversial and victim of dispute. Therefore, the water unavailability during the times of need is adding to the agricultural decline in Pakistan.

Thus, Pakistan remains a victim to the natural disasters.

It is because of the location of Pakistan. The natural disasters

as like floods and wildfires inflict grave pain to the agro-industry. Consider the floods of

2022, which had had devastating impacts on agriculture of Pakistan.

As it destroyed thousands of irrigated land, spoiled ready

cash crops, and caused problems like waterlogging in lands. All

of this made agricultural production of Pakistan nose-dive.

Thus, natural disasters remain disadvantageous to agriculture sector of Pakistan.

Moreover, the climate change in Pakistan that has

the rain patterns in Pakistan also adds to the agricultural woes of Pakistan. The changing of rain patterns has affected the agro-industry by bringing rains during sensitive times, and by not bringing rains during the times of extreme need. This hurts the already vulnerable agriculture sector of Pakistan. Thus, climate change has affected Pakistan the most (Cresman watch report 2022)

Pakistan remains 4th most vulnerable country to it. (Cresman watch)

Thus, the change in ~~rain~~ rain patterns caused by climate change happens to be a cause for agricultural decline of Pakistan.

Unfortunately, the department concerned for handling natural disasters is very poorly equipped and ill prepared. This ill-preparedness is fuelling the flames of agricultural decline in Pakistan. Its ill preparedness let the natural disasters do the damage to the agriculture sector. Had this department effective and well prepared, the country would have less damage

from natural disasters. Consider the case of flies attack on agricultural fields for understanding. The management authorities were very late to inform and aware farmers of the situation. They also did very little to minimize the impact of the flies attack. (This is exclusively published in the recent report published by the agriculture University of Tandojam, Sindh)

Furthermore, there is a serious lack of innovation in agro industry of Pakistan. It can be evidenced from the fact that agricultural productions of Pakistan have increased very little when compared with fellow developing countries. The agriculture share to GDP remains 18-21% according to Economic Survey of Pakistan 2022.

There is no coming of new ideas, new technology or new policy designed to advance agriculture of Pakistan. This makes agriculture growth of Pakistan stagnant.

More importantly, Pakistani farmers still practice outdated

agricultural practices which use maximum water, even. Sometimes waste water and give average output. A key understanding can be grasped from the practices of farmers of Sindh, who water the fields beyond the needs and deteriorate quality. Sometimes, due to lack of knowledge they even do premature harvesting, which spoils the product. Therefore, instead of increasing and advancing agriculture sector, these practices, which are outdated, are contributing to the decline of agriculture.

Furthermore, there is very little agricultural research taking place in Pakistan. The lack of research deprives the agriculture sector from the booms which can be got from the research. It also gives little analysis to the masses engaged in agriculture as to what to produce, where to produce and how to produce the best. It has been established by research that lands which are infertile, can be made

fertile by following techniques provided in above researchs.

Saudi Arabia is making thousands of leftover land in its territory fertile by following researchs and the country is making huge profits from it. The same can happen in Pakistan if Pakistan adopts right path.

lastly, Pakistan due to unavailability of skill teaching centres lack skilled labours. All or majority of the labours that country has got is unskilled or poorly taught. Therefore, they fail in adding value addition to the agricultural sector. Their unskilled nature deprives them of decent pay and good opportunities. Had they been skilled labours, they would have contributed largely to the sector. Therefore, unskilled labours largely remains a cause for agricultural decline in Pakistan.

All of the above causes indicate towards an alarming situation of agricultural

Sector of Pakistan. It is in dire need of a way forward to stop agricultural decline.

First and foremost, Pakistan needs to enact a law limiting real estate developments on agricultural lands. It will save the fertile land enhance the agricultural capabilities of Pakistan.

Secondly, Pakistan needs to construct maximum dams in order to store more water for the times of need. It requires completion of already going projects like **Diamer** and **Basho dam** as well. In addition to that country needs to revive the old dams as well, which are in dire need of maintenance as **manchar** and **mangla**. These dams will be a saviour for Pakistan's declining agricultural sector.

Thirdly, Pakistan needs to strengthen its disaster management authority for

saving the fields and large lands from the devastating impacts of natural disasters. It will not only minimize the impact, but enhancing their capabilities would ensure early warnings of any catastrophe coming to country.

More importantly, Pakistan needs to adopt drip irrigation method wholly. It is a unique and modern form of farming which saves a lot of water and irrigates the fields better, improving production. Countries like United States, Canada and other even India have shifted largely to drip irrigation. Pakistan's minority of farmers use it today. Given Pakistan's need of water and increasing population, drip irrigation will ensure agricultural boom while saving water.

Furthermore, Pakistan needs to make it mandatory to conduct a research annually on agriculture laws, production and provide ways to correct flaws and increase

production. History is witness to the fact that research and thorough analysis of any thing have benefited humans, be it anything even agriculture. Therefore, research work annually is of immense importance for the agricultural boom of Pakistan.

Lastly, Pakistan needs to equip its massive population with required skills, so that they can bring a positive change in agricultural sector. It will also fetch labourers with lucrative salary packages improving their lifestyles. This is a precedent, the world is following. It is pertinent for Pakistan to do the same.

To conclude, Pakistan is a country that largely depends on agriculture. It is because of decent share of agriculture to the GDP. Thus, Pakistan in the contemporary times is facing agricultural decline; which is caused by real estate development taking place on agro lands;

climate impacts causing natural disasters; lack of skilled labourers and innovation. All of this paints a gloomy picture of the agricultural sector. Therefore, agricultural decline in Pakistan is in need of immediate way forward. The way forward requires enactment of prudent real estate laws, construction of dams, strengthening disaster management and adopting new techniques while training workforce the required skills. It is easier said than done, and requires a pragmatic approach. Surely, by adopting all these measures Pakistan can turn the agricultural decline to agricultural boom.

(mam, Count of essay is around 2200 words to 2250 words. Please provide detailed remarks here as well mam, Thanks - largely thankful to you.)