

# Chapter 10

## Prospects of Agricultural Education in Pakistan– Options and Challenges: Agriculture Education in Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

*Agricultural education is significant aspects as agriculture is the driving force of economy of the country. Published literature on agricultural education impact and challenges is scant. Hence, through a mixed methods technique, this chapter is formulated to bridge the literature gap and persuade others to carry on research. Grey literature and primary data collected through interviews was utilized to formulate this chapter. Collected data was qualitative in nature and through content analysis, a meaningful interpretation was created. Agricultural universities, training institutes and the Department of Extension are major pillars for agricultural education of students and the farming masses. Different case studies are quoted inside the chapter to reflect trends, impacts and challenges. This chapter summarized that the quality of agricultural education across the country is poor and quantity-oriented. For quality assurance we would have to shift our priorities and develop holistic approaches to bring improved quality, particularly in agricultural institutions.*

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## **AGRICULTURE IN PAKISTAN**

Agriculture is prominent sector in Pakistan with 19.5% share in national economy, providing 42.3% labor force, raw material for value added sectors and livelihood to millions of families. Thus, agriculture is central for nation building, achieving food security and alleviating poverty. Ever increasing population of Pakistan demands more nutritious products like fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products not only to meet requirements but also to sustain good health. Government is on board to boost production through improved infrastructure, investments and building modern supply chains. In result, agriculture sector achieved growth of 3.46% against target of 3.5% while in previous year the growth was only 0.27%. This achievement of target was pertinent to utilization of modern tools and machinery or farm operations like inputs, precision farming through laser land leveler, mechanized harvesting and conservation of natural resource soil and water.

Educating farmers about adoption of modern technologies and precise execution is the force to bring success in agriculture sector. Research sector the founder of these innovative technologies and Extension sector professions, who are the teachers, communicators and facilitators simultaneously are soul of this success. Education has significant relationship with adoption of technologies, extended awareness and increased profit. This education is being rendered by extension sector on farm level. Importance of education cannot be denied in agriculture, therefore, country has established as strong network of formal and non-formal agricultural education for the residents of country. It is well understood that, as the education rises, the adoption of technologies, production of crops and profit of agriculture sector will increase.

## **FORMAL EDUCATION**

This type of education is rendered with formalities and boundaries. In this type of system, admission to the institution, attendance, classrooms, classes, theory and practical, examination, follow up of rules and regulations and award of degree and certificate is mandatory. For instance, the education given in schools, colleges and universities is well understood example of formal education. Formal agricultural education is also given in universities and for this purpose various agricultural universities are working across the country.

### **University Level Education**

Inception of Punjab Agriculture College and Research Institute, Lyallpur in 1906, gave rise to initiation of agricultural education in undivided Punjab. Later in 1961, this college was upgraded to University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Pakistan; the oldest and leading university of Pakistan in agriculture sector. Prior this formal emergence, agriculture education was rendered through community development programs. The reports on first community Development program “Village Agricultural and Industrial Development” (V-AID) program reflects efforts to improve the life standards of rural people through education, motivation, organizing village councils and modernizing agriculture (Waseem, 1982; Chaudhry, 2002). Agricultural education services remained integral part of other community development programs as well i.e. in Basic Democracy System (BD-System) through education not only the problems of rural people were solved but also a sense of self-help was developed (Chaudhry, 2002).

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