

PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC FOOD POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN PAKISTAN A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Little is known about role marketing towards sustainable agriculture. This study seeks to contribute in the literature of marketing in public sector agri-organizations. The primary objective of this paper was to explore the role of marketing in the development of organic agriculture policies and practices. Based on qualitative research method, using a case study approach, data triangulation was applied to validate the findings. Interviews were conducted in six federal government agriculture institutions. The results indicate that Pakistan could not materialize its potential of organic agriculture. Apart from that, several barriers in the development of organic food policies and practices were also revealed in marketing context. These include insufficient marketing experts, lacking in marketing boards, inadequate marketing communication, ineffective strategic marketing planning, insufficient marketing, and consumer research. The findings of this paper recommended that marketing can contribute significantly to assist policy makers in adapting realistic and rationale approach towards developing organic food industry in non-regulated markets generally and in Pakistan particularly.

Key words: Public sector, organic agriculture, marketing, barriers, qualitative, Pakistan

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INTRODUCTION

Commercialization and modern food technologies in agriculture have introduced several threats to food safety, economy, and biodiversity. Numerous food scandals and food safety issues have created a serious risk to human health and societies (Al-Swidi, Mohammed Rafiul Huque, Haroon Hafeez, & Noor Mohd Shariff, 2014; Hughner, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz, & Stanton, 2007; Seok, 2017). In context of Pakistan, rich literature stream also confirmed that consumers are commonly exposed to potentially toxic metals (PTMs) such as chromium, nickel, zinc, arsenic, cadmium, and lead – since many vegetables, fruits, and cereal crops grown in contaminated areas (Fareena Samoo, Kandhro, Jalbani, Mastoi, & Sohu, 2018; Iqbal et al., 2018; Khanum et al., 2017). The political³ and judicial⁴ interventions also provide ample evidence of food safety issues in Pakistan. All these problems have questioned the sustainability of the green revolution and future of food modernization. Perhaps, food safety issues deal with a wide range of concerns, including public health, agriculture methods and food modernization, which require constructive intervention by policy makers (Havelaar et al., 2007). Hence, the preliminary argument of this paper is based on the premise of government intervention to ensure safe food consumption, which is essential for consumer well-being and national health system.

Sustainability is considered at the heart of organic agriculture (Reganold & Wachter, 2016; Wright, 2012) particularly in economic perspective (Khanal, 2009; Singh & Grover, 2011; Thorsøe, 2015). Organic food is emerging as a combination of traditional and innovative food production, processing and preservation methods with contemporary marketing practices (Thøgersen, 2009). The organic movement ought to be considered valuable driving force towards sustainable food practices by transforming consumer values towards food quality through sustainable methods of production (Schösler, de Boer, & Boersema, 2013). Therefore, it is crucial to provide the latest technologies, training and awareness about organic agriculture to the farming communities (Anjum, Zada, & Tareen, 2016) especially for survival of small farmers and to support their engagement with agriculture, to meet food security and livelihood issues (Morshedi, Lashgarara, Hosseini, & Najafabadi, 2017; Nandwani & Nwosisi, 2016; Sitthisuntikul, Yossuck, & Limnirankul, 2018).

Thirdly, at the same time organic farming also contributes towards rural development and employment generation, which ultimately contributes to economic growth of local communities (Marasteanu & Jaenicke, 2016; Pugliese, 2001) mainly through local and international market development on premium prices. Regulations and standards defined by public sector agri departments can promote sustainable consumption easier and more efficiently by enhancing trust, reducing search times and ensuring standards in labeling and certifications (Jayaratne, Sullivan Mort, & Clare, 2015) that can also help in instant development of the domestic market.

³ After conducting tests on 16 brands of packaged milk given Ultra High Temperature (UHT) and pasteurization treatment, the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIIR) has found that only six are safe for consumption, the National Assembly was told on 30th January, 2017.

⁴ Supreme Court prohibits dairy farmers from injecting cows to increase milk production.

However, according to Poerting (2015) despite, organic food production and its increasing demand in Pakistan, still, there exist a “systemic bias” against the organic agriculture and reports that “actors in the organic agriculture network claim that national research institutes, policymakers, and scholars at agricultural universities are biased against organic Agriculture” (p. 150). Nevertheless, the scholastic communities from various fields have emphasized the policy intervention on different aspects of the organic food industry generally and specifically in Pakistan. However, to the best of our knowledge, the perspectives proposed about policy intervention in the stream of literature have not been put into systematic tests in countries where organic food regulations are lacking. Public policy-makers have been found in ignoring marketing and consumer research, even if the policy issue evidently pertains to consumption markets that may have public health implications (Aspara & Tikkanen, 2017). Marketing could be a faithful discipline and well suited to such analyses (Stewart, 2015b).

This paper has filled this research gap by answering following research objective.

What are the prospects and challenges in the development of organic food policies and practices in marketing perspective?

This paper identifies areas where marketers can contribute in developing organic food policies and practices particularly as sustainable agriculture. Finally, based on findings of this paper, a strategic model is proposed for development of organic food policies and practices in Pakistan.

CONCEPTUAL BASE & LITERATURE REVIEW

Organic agriculture global statistics and trends

Organic agriculture became a vital market segment of the agri food system (Crandall et al., 2010). According to (Willer, 2018), the total organic market is reached to more than € 80 billion euros. The US is leading with € 38.9 billion followed by Germany, France, China, Canada and the UK which account 9.5, 6.7, 5.9, 3.0 and € 2.4 billion respectively. Denmark has maximum market share of organic food products, which is around 13 percent of food sales⁵. Hence, there is clear evidence of exponential market growth. The increasing demand for organic in the EU and US along with rising consumer awareness and increase in per capita income of Asian countries shows major potential of organic food in Asia (Willer, Lernoud, & Kilcher, 2014). Moreover, promotion of organic food system has more significance for Asian countries as it contributes in food security, safe food supplies, health issues, sustainable rural and agriculture development and it protects the environment from degradation (Partap, 2010). The sustainability of organic agriculture systems could be suitable in enhancing the role of agriculture governance as an alternative method of production.

Organic agriculture in Pakistan

Agriculture plays a crucial role in the national economy of Pakistan. Its geographic and ecological diversification provides competitive advantage for cultivation of valued crops, fruits

⁵ <http://organicdenmark.com/organics-in-denmark/facts-and-figures>

and vegetables throughout the year (Musa, Program, & Gurung, 2015) particularly naturally or by default organic⁶ across the various regions (Anjum et al., 2016). The area under organic by default in Pakistan is about 1.51 million hectares as compared to inorganic which is 22.6 million hectare (Musa et al., 2015)⁷. However, despite enormous naturally organic regions, the internationally certified organic agriculture land in Pakistan is 45,299 ha which is only 0.1 percent of total land and far less than other Asian countries (Willer, 2018). Whereas, a major portion of certified organic food is traded in international markets.

One of the major reasons behind unstructured organic food industry in Pakistan is the absence of organic food regulations, which are still in process (Lernoud & Willer, 2017) and could not be finalized due to various unexplored reasons. Thus, like many other nations the organic food sector and policymaking is also elusive in Pakistan. More recently, some regional countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and even African states such as Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda have also introduced organic regulations in their countries with proper certification and labelling procedures (Willer, 2018). Private and public benefits of organic agriculture suggest that it should be promoted to encourage sustainable farming practices (Husnain, Khan, & Mahmood, 2017). In the contemporary market economy, the organic agriculture and food production system is gaining a vital role in national and international economies.

Organic agriculture policies in developing countries

The scientific literature on organic agriculture in less developed countries contain only a small fraction of total research (Reganold & Wachter, 2016). In the meantime, in the context of developing countries Bhattarai et al. (2013) also mentioned a key role that can be played by government agencies for developing a robust supply chain. In addition, government support is also found notable in the development of organic farming and marketing in developing countries such as India, Hungary and Brazil, particularly in Brazil where the government encourages procurement of organic commodities for public sector organization and nutrition programs through policy frameworks (Edwardson & Santacoloma, 2013). Hsu et al. (2016) also concludes that cooperation among government, producers and other chain members of the organic food industry ensures its development and growth. They further indicate numerous practices, i.e. (a) promotion and training to make sure its availability and food safety issues within a healthy environment. (b) Reducing certification cost to motivate farmers in order to increase its farming area. (c) To develop the organic tourist farm for enhancing consumer trust on production methods and tractability in order to develop their attitude and purchase intentions. Such practices can increase farmer's income that may attract more young farmers, which possibly can contribute towards rural development.

Further, Reganold & Wachter (2016) revealed that conventional mindset by individual groups and organizations develop major cultural biases against the connotations of organic agriculture, which limit the spread of its practices. In addition, Reganold & Wachter (2016) further suggest that policy instruments to promote organic farming should incorporate farmer and

⁶ For various categories of organic agriculture see Bennett & Franzel, 2017

⁷ This content/book was provided by Dr. Riaz, author and Ex-Director NIOA during his interview dated 10/5/2016

scientist involvement in research and development (R&D) decision making; effective extension and outreach infrastructure must be engaged for dissemination of information to improve farmers' knowledge, skills and capacity. Similarly, Tiraieyari, Hamzah, & Samah, (2017) also revealed that sustainable practices are mandatory, hence, it has been a part of a vital plan for Malaysian government to encourage small- scale growers to invest in organic farming as an effective approach to increase their farm income. Such practices ultimately help in protecting the environment and possibly can promote exports of the country. Hence, the constructive role of government seems mandatory for the development, expansion, and transformation of the organic food system in the longer interests of all stakeholders. Therefore, this paper finds out perception about organic agriculture among agriculture scientists, agriculture economists, and policy makers in Pakistan.

METHODS

Case study method contributes to policy research as backbone especially in contextualized problem definition. Secondly it raises policy relevant issues and eventually extracts practical advice (Pal, 2005). Therefore, case study method was used with holistic case approach (Yin, 2003). Preparatory desk research was carried out for developing an interview guide for each institute and department separately based on published literature, accessible documents, research reports and particularly in accordance with term of references (ToRs) / domain of the concerned institutions and departments.

The respondents were interviewed from six federal institutions considered as cases including (i) the National Agriculture Research Center (NARC) and sub institutes (ii), the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) and sub institutes, (iii) the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR), (iv) the Ministry of Planning, Development & Reform (MPDR) (v) the Pakistan Council for Science and Technology (PCST) and (vi) Agriculture Policy Institute (API). The list of respondents and interview details is presented at Annex-II. The sample size was 30 collected through purposive sampling and its subtypes i.e. extreme/deviant case sampling, critical case sampling, expert sampling. The respondents were agriculture scientists, policy executives, and senior agriculture representatives. Data were collected in multiple sessions. Majority of interviews were transcribed as verbatim while some were transcribed as edited transcription. The transcription resulted in 36799 words. Since, researcher was interviewer as well as the transcriber, thereby; it reduced compromising influences with respect to the transcript quality (Mero-Jaffe, 2011).

The analysis were made through six-step suggested by Braun and Clarke (2012). Narrative preparation was done in first step. Data were transcribed and properties and characteristics of the data were identified. Initial codes were generated in second step. In third step, data were organized in accordance with codes. It follows themes identification and placing codes into potential themes. Afterward, themes were further reviewed and divided into subthemes to generate a thematic map for analysis. Themes were further refined to assign label to each theme. Finally, findings were written with support of raw data (quotes) and interpretation was carried out through theoretical triangulation in order to report the noted phenomena. The results of interviews were organized and presented for comparison, contrast and analysis. It explored the insight of respondents about research questions. The NVivo -11 was used wherein several

queries were applied to explore the data pattern for further interpretation and findings. NVivo facilitate in data storage and analysis, yet, it require researcher efforts for data organizing, coding and analysis (Lodhi & Malik, 2013). Various Nvivo results, including word frequency, word tree, word cloud and models of the conducted investigation are presented in Annex – I.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section makes analysis and explores the factors behind inadequate policy progress in organic agriculture specifically in context of marketing. The data were interpreted by identifying and explaining the core meaning of the respondents experiences, knowledge and recommendations which were cross checked by other sources, i.e. official documents, content, reports, news etc. Nvivo results are presented in Annex-I.

PGS is an important tool that encourages progressive, small and marginal landholders to enter into organic farming to support domestic organic food markets to grow (Mukherjee et al., 2018). An ample evidence of performance output in organic agriculture was the nonexistence of “Participatory Guarantee System⁸” (PGS) in organic farming in Pakistan. Ironically, in comparison with other Asian and African countries as shown in fig. 1 there was not even a single PGS in Pakistan, irrespective of vast organic land (as discussed above).



Figure 1: PGS MAP (IFOAM)

Source: Author insertion extracted from IFOAM PGS map⁹

Marketing communication in agri – organizations for executing organic agriculture

There was overwhelming evidences corroborating the notion that there was inadequate “marketing communication” in agriculture organizations to engage with concerned audience, such as within agriculture organizations and with farmers, enterprises, INGOs, exporters, consumers, civil society and other stakeholders. Moreover, there was lack of stakeholder awareness programs, dearth of public relation campaigns and inadequate promotional activities. Thus, insufficient communication, collaboration and coordination kept agriculture departments restricted for creating synergy towards creating attitudinal and behavioral responses from market

⁸ Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are locally focused quality assurance systems. They certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange.

⁹ <https://pgs.ifoam.bio/>

players (Fill, 2006). For instance, by virtue of marketing communication and coordination public sector can obtain essential data from regional and provincial departments i.e. (a) organic produces (b) list of organic farmers (c) supply chain of organic products (d) data about chain members; (e) organic food certified companies (f) domestic companies (g) importers (h) fertilizers and seed companies etc.

A senior scientist pointed out that

“Main thing is that people at the secretary level even do not know about all these matters, and here no one has interest to tell the secretary (ministry), because management (policy makers) will pay attention to whatever discussed by my chairman, they will not listen to me. Chairman and DG (NARC&PARC), these are two technical heads, both have no interest”.

(Respondent, 2).

Cross-sector collaboration hold high potential for mutual gains and it became more significant in this century where marketing is playing crucial and evolving role (Austin, 2013). In same context, it is important to underline some other peculiarities that public sector had insufficient collaboration, communication and information sharing with core stakeholders of organic agriculture. There was no private public partnership, joint ventures and linkages with organic player's i.e. consumers, growers, supply chain members, farmer associations, I/NGOs, certification companies, etc. Austin, (2013) has further emphasize on cause related marketing which can play a vital role in context of present study particularly in the progress of organic agriculture and its market development, wherein both nonprofit and businesses can discover opportunities for mutual gains.

Therefore, the insufficient marketing communication with internal and external stakeholders creates confusion, misconception and biasedness towards organic agriculture among policy makers, social scientists and other external stakeholders. The significance of “awareness” is also observed in Nvivo results (Annex -I) of word cloud and word frequency, wherein, nine respondents on fifty occasions talked about awareness which has 0.30 weighted percentage. Likewise, text query (fig.ii) of Nvivo results also support our argument of weak marketing communication since respondents were emphasizing on inadequate information and awareness about organic farming in different aspects. Likewise, results of matrix coding also highlights the notion of misconception among participants.

It is pertinent to mention that, like many other food associations in Pakistan, there was no official organic trade association was registered with the Directorate General of Trade Organizations (DGTO), government of Pakistan in accordance with its Trade Organizations Ordinance, 2007. One of the respondents from supply chain survey had revealed the significance of trade organization that in the absence of any such registered association, it is almost impossible to create pressure on policy makers or government institutions in respect of organic legislations (field notes, 5/10/2017,Rawalpindi). As a result, the stakeholders in the organic agriculture sector could have to face enormous delayed in policy making as illustrated by respondent that “their (government) main stakeholders are farmers and consumer to whom they should ask what they want for development, but they (government) don't ask them. They never

have such meetings. So these things develop time to time. This procedure will develop slowly (evolution instead transformation)” (Respondent, 5).

Developing regulated organic food industry require strong bonding among organic agriculture operators to initiate legitimate movement as a “pressure group” or lobby grouping to influence concerned organizations, policy makers and politicians (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010; Smith, 1987).

Role of marketing towards organic food policies and practices

Nevertheless, there are two recognized broad systems in order to distribute goods and services, i.e. markets and government (Stewart, 2015a; Varian, 2014) . However, on contrary the perception and marketing orientation (Ciencias et al., 2014) of policy makers about organic food system and government intervention is inadequate as depict in views of respondent, “*Why K&NN¹⁰ need certification. When K&NN is claiming that I offer free hormones then I don’t have need of any certification, it’s my trust and I buy this. So developing trust on certification is domain of companies. It does not matter how many laws we made and certification we introduced. So, organic food model is always based on private sector marketing*”. (Respondent, 5)

Agriculture has been a central component of business development and export in the Pakistani economy. Pakistan has rich agri-geography and diverse climate which provide competitive advantage to cultivate naturally organic crops in a sustainable manner. Marketing can help in the era when public institutions must need performance in better public interest (Serrat, 2010). It was reported by various respondents that in contrast with other agriculture projects such as drip water irrigation, tunnel farming, and installation of solar system,¹¹ etc – the organic agriculture should also be promoted through private public partnership. Wherein, the incentives and subsidies on technological advancement can be offered to farmers and other supply chain players. Therefore, we can suggest here that the organic food industry can be promoted and developed through “marketisation”, which transfer public-sector actions to commercial marketing in the private industry by directing products and services to the competitive forces in the open market (Buurma, 2001). Moreover, the operating style of marketization to “run government like a business” has been realized for the last three decades in the field of public management, specifically when it is directly linked to consumer and entrepreneur markets (Molander, Felleson, & Friman, 2018). Therefore, marketing practices could have an important role in promoting organic farming among stakeholders where through “marketisation” the public sector can shift organic farming activities to the private sector for competitive forces of the commercial marketplace (Buurma, 2001).

Analyzing the marketing environment (Micro & Macro) for policy decisions

The increase of the multi perspective food consciousness has had a transformational effect on food markets, with the organic food market expanding at a notable rate globally as well as

¹⁰ A conventional food brand, <http://www.kandns.com/>

¹¹ http://ofwm.agripunjab.gov.pk/info_subsidies

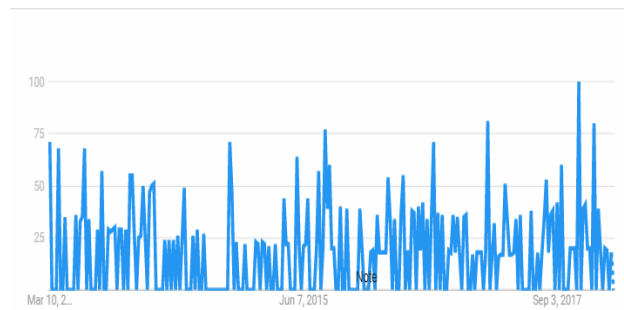
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domestically. Yet, there is still considerable disagreement among agriculture economists in Pakistan about the organic agriculture system, its methods, demand and significance.

The results of google trend¹² as supporting evidence in Fig 2 and Fig 3 for the term organic food shows noteworthy results of growing searches in Pakistan.

(Mar 2013 - Feb 2018)



Source: Authors' own extraction

Figure 2: Google Trend Graph for Organic food search in Pakistan

(March-2013 – February 2018)



Source: Authors' own extraction

Fig 3. Google Trend Map for Organic Food Search in Pakistan

Further, the marketing research especially, the consumer and supply chain aspects of organic farming were found neglected by agri economist and policy makers (top-down approach).

¹² <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?cat=71&geo=PK&q=Organic%20food>

“But as far as organic is concerned, so our vision is very silent about it and secondly, what is our capacity for it, what is the market demand of organic. So with research from time to time we came to know about demand.” (Respondent, 5)

Our results confirmed that policy executives generally make decisions on organic farming without market intelligence. In addition, the policymaking via group model was least derived from interests groups i.e. the consumer associations, exporters, entrepreneurs, farmers, social activists and media. While discussing with a senior social scientist at PARC, he revealed that

“Organic farming is not in our research priorities so we don’t have enough material on it” (field note, Islamabad, 9th Aug 2016).

A problem with government institutions seems that they are reluctant to innovation, changing needs, new technologies, and competitive actions. While, once in place, it is difficult to alter (Schuck, 2014) and even more difficult to transform existing policies. Our findings also support the notion that in the era of contemporary global competition and several environmental, economic, social, and cultural threats – policy makers need to learn about “analysis of marketing environment” specifically for matters pertaining directly to general public and market players. The marketing environmental analysis for the organic food industry can further be divided into micro and macro (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). In microenvironment, the policy makers should examine the factors that affect its ability to serve public; enterprises, growers and their input suppliers, market intermediaries, domestic and global markets especially global competitors in organic food markets. While, at macro level, policy makers need to incorporate the effects of large societal forces at the time of policy planning such as national demographics and health statistics, economics, political, technological, cultural and natural forces. These findings further realized to examine the role of strategic marketing in the development of organic food policies and practices.

Organic agriculture and strategic marketing planning

“In real matter of fact the top leadership has no vision about organic and they don’t know about organic and this is a simple thing, who will proceed it further, nobody is there” (Respondent, 1).

Public policy plays crucial in the promotion of sustainable development. It generates signals and develops the regulatory and institutional frameworks for reformatory, promotional and participatory roles that stimulate the actions of all actors (Lobo et al., 2014).

“When political will, technical manpower and management could not be on same page, it (organic food development) cannot be done” (Respondent)

The five year business plan (2013-18) by the Planning & Development Division (P&DD) of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC)¹³ mentioned the organic products in different domains of various regions. However, during field visits its implementation was found missing by concerned institutes. Moreover, the role of organic farming was completely ignored by social

¹³ http://www.parc.gov.pk/files/parc_pk/BP_FINAL-22-10-13.pdf

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scientists and policy makers in the 2025 vision plan by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms (MPD&R)¹⁴. *“Every government (political) has its own priorities; some work on a specific sector, others work on different”* (Respondent, 6).

A respondent revealed the role of strategic plans while discussing the procedure of projects approvals and told that

“They (planning commission) take the rule of business (Domain of work and priorities) against the proposal; and where there is a conflict they just don’t pick that up (don’t consider)” (Respondent, 7).

Similarly another respondents stated that

“When they (scientists) bring projects to us then we can tell them that it’s not matching the vision and in vision, it has no importance or it is not according to vision” (Respondent, 5).

Consequently, the actual impact of neglecting organic farming in institutional future plans and in strategic plans reflects in the promotion and approval of organic agriculture projects with respect to its funding – particularly, when they are not declared as priority areas. As a result, members of the project approval committees could not prefer organic agriculture projects in the light of strategic planning. As revealed by a senior director ,

“If the project is in priorities and lies in standard, then we actually have three committees including appraisal committee, technical advisory committee and board of directors. If they are satisfied to method, standard and scientific approach, then we will give (fund) it” (Respondent, 9).

In another case, during discussions with a group of scientist (economist) at NARC, they shared their anecdotal experience, when organic commodity of apricot was returned from China due to its negative laboratory report since they were dried non-organically (field notes, 7/5/16, Islamabad). As a result without any thorough investigation, they concluded at institutional level that production of organic food is not possible in Pakistan. However, in real matter of fact, there are hundreds of certified organic food orchards in Gilgit Baltistan, exporting organic apricot and other fruits to Europe and US. Certified organic food companies are also participating in organic trade exhibitions i.e BIOFECH. Potential of organic farming is also supported by Nvivo results (Annex - I) – wherein, word “production”, “export” and “international” in context of organic farming is used by respondents on number of occasions. It is evident in results of word cloud, word frequency, text query and matrix coding that organic agriculture can plays vital role in international trade for Pakistan.

The noted evidence implies that may be due to lack of interests, expertise and paucity of database causing intentionally or unintentionally negligence by policy makers and agri-economist in this field. As a result, without proper research, government personnel are unnecessarily refuting the organic food system in order to justify and defend their positions and progress in this sector.

¹⁴ <https://www.pc.gov.pk/uploads/vision2025/Vision-2025-Executive-Summary.pdf>

Thus, lack of strategic orientation (see McCamley & Gilmore, 2018) was evident and such a situation realized the role of strategic marketing in public sector agri organizations. Firstly, the agriculture system in Pakistan is lacking in “marketing boards” as they have been more prevalent in developing than in developed economies. In view of the increasing role of organic farming in modern agriculture – there is immense need of marketing boards for advisory, promotional and regulation boards at federal, provincial and regional levels (Abbott, 1967; Tamilia, 2007) for the development of organic agriculture in Pakistan as a sustainable farming system. Moreover, such boards should give a mandate with respect to marketing functions i.e. marketing research, strategic marketing planning, sustainable supply chain from farming input to disposal of products, value added and other such marketing activities as required in accordance with market scenario (see Tamilia, 2007). Nevertheless, leadership direction and the use of marketing concepts reaffirm the importance of the public sector in the national marketing miracle as happened in Japan (Marber, 2008).

In addition, one of the preliminary agenda in the development of organic food system could be possible through public policy marketing (Buurma, 2001; Marber, 2008) which may require planning and execution process to be implemented by government that could initiates marketing exchanges with social sector by demanding specific require social behavior and other desire reciprocations. Such implications may enable stakeholders in achieving their mutual objectives by developing and offering effective policy instruments – acceptable for all organic food operators.

Hence, it is essential to incorporate the implications of “strategic marketing” into agriculture institutional policies for development of the organic food industry. The strategic marketing require to extract some prerequisite knowledge about organic farming such as analyzing environmental and economic factors; technological environment; identifying market opportunities and threats to forecast future trends in agriculture areas of organic food for the enterprise in domestic and international markets; and participating in setting objectives and formulating policies and strategies for development of organic food sector in Pakistan. There are many other factors identified in present research that can contribute towards strategic planning of organic agriculture. The policy electives indeed operating through weak market intelligence towards regulation mechanism and its scope in domestic and international markets. In addition, the policy making via group model was least derived from interests group i.e the consumer associations, practitioners, entrepreneurs, farmers, social activist and media. While discussing with senior social scientist at PARC, he revealed that “Organic farming is not in our research priorities so we don’t have enough material on it” (field note, Islamabad, 9th Aug, 2016)

CONCLUSION

Organic agriculture is not a matter of conversion in Pakistan. There is tremendous potential in traditional and natural agriculture in many regions, which is near to organic and can be converted into certified organic farming with relatively less efforts as an alternative method of sustainable production. Since, agriculture generally and organic food, particularly deals with a number of market stakeholders, hence, it is necessary to understand agricultural governance in a marketing context.

In view of three questions raised in this study, the findings clearly illustrate the pattern that agriculture economist, and policy makers have misconception, inadequate awareness and weak positioning about organic farming system and its benefits. Moreover, instead focusing on demand of domestic and international markets as a specific food segment, which creates an opportunity for products and market divarication, organic agriculture is perceived as rival of conventional agriculture. As a result, there is a biasedness against organic agriculture and policy makers, agriculture economist, and other authoritative concerned in agriculture departments have unjustly ignored organic farming, in the name of food security. This phenomena ultimately became a major factor behind a weak institutional performance. While for the same reason, Pakistan has not been able to materialize immense potential of organic farming in domestic as well as in international markets i.e. inadequate global marketing awareness (GMA). Policy makers perceive market intelligence and interpret it in accordance with their personal views, in the light of anecdotal observations without any evidence based systematic research and prior marketing knowledge. Such approach has misled them from real life phenomena and actual market trends.

In the light of our findings, we can assert that strategic relevance of organic farming still needs recognition, protection and promotion, which require effective marketing approach in agriculture organizations in order to understand the stakeholder's perspective. Moreover, there was notable evidence of weak "internal marketing", where the scientific community is not motivated and supported by strategic management to promote organic agriculture research and practices. The implementation of "Marketisation" was also found missing in the public sector which can help in shifting organic farming activities to the private sector for competitive forces of the commercial marketplace. In addition, the implication of "marketisation" was also proposed for development of the organic food segment, since it was found very successful in conventional agriculture practices. There are number of evidences report in findings that confirmed "weak marketing communication" within public sector and across other stakeholders.

When government actions can directly affect the well-being of growers, consumers, enterprises, exporters and other market players then it should be mandatory to incorporate the "marketing environmental scanning" at micro and macro level for strategic planning. Further, there were robust evidences of inadequate "strategic marketing" in institutional policies that can set direction for organic food industry. One of the major reasons behind lack of organic food policies was the absence of "marketing boards" that can contribute significantly towards advisory, promotional and regulation activities. Presented evidences in the light of literature review confirmed that marketing knowledge is required as a major prerequisite for policy executives so their thinking and actions may reflect the preferences to organic agriculture in

holistic way. Therefore, we can specifically conclude here that marketing skills of policy makers can play vital role in the development of organic food policies and practices. Policy makers needs to examine organic food industry in marketing perspective since being market commodity, it directly deals with business stakeholders particularly in global and sustainable context.

In holistic perspective, through “cause related marketing” organic farming can assist in overcoming many socio economic issues and rural poverty particularly by meeting food security, livelihood, and unemployment issues in Pakistan. At the same time, the export of organic products can replace the aid with trade. Likewise, the prospects of FDI in the organic food industry from Chinese, Western (UK, Germany, US) and other such nations can promote organic agriculture in specific regions through diffusion of innovation. Thus, effective government intervention can also help in rural prosperity of economically deprived areas

Annex- I

Nvivo Results

(a) Word cloud

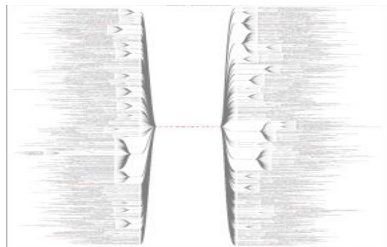


(b) Word Frequency of the Study

Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
organic	515	3.11	land	49	0.30
farming	78	0.47	international	44	0.27
national	72	0.43	products	48	0.29
certification	71	0.43	market	45	0.27
production	66	0.40	chemical	41	0.25
develop	54	0.33	process	40	0.24
policy	52	0.31	export	27	0.16
awareness	50	0.30	Consumer	26	0.16
funds	52	0.31	Certified	23	0.14

Note: - Above mention are initial most used words up to 23 times while this list goes on.

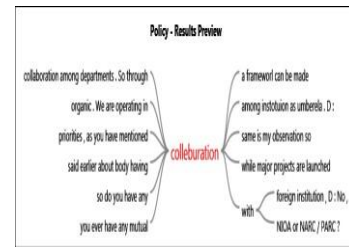
(c) Text Query



(i) Organic



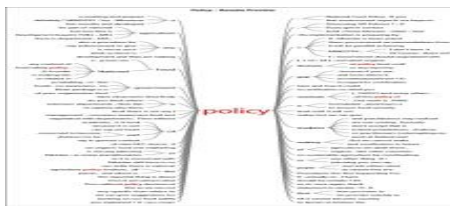
(ii) Awareness



(iii) Collaboration



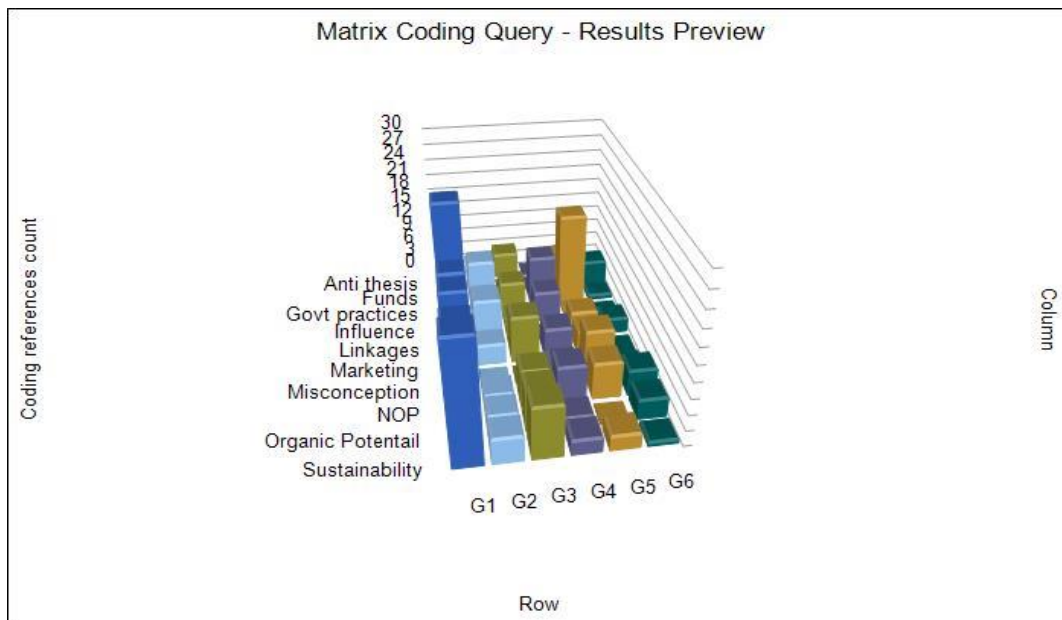
(vi) Marketing



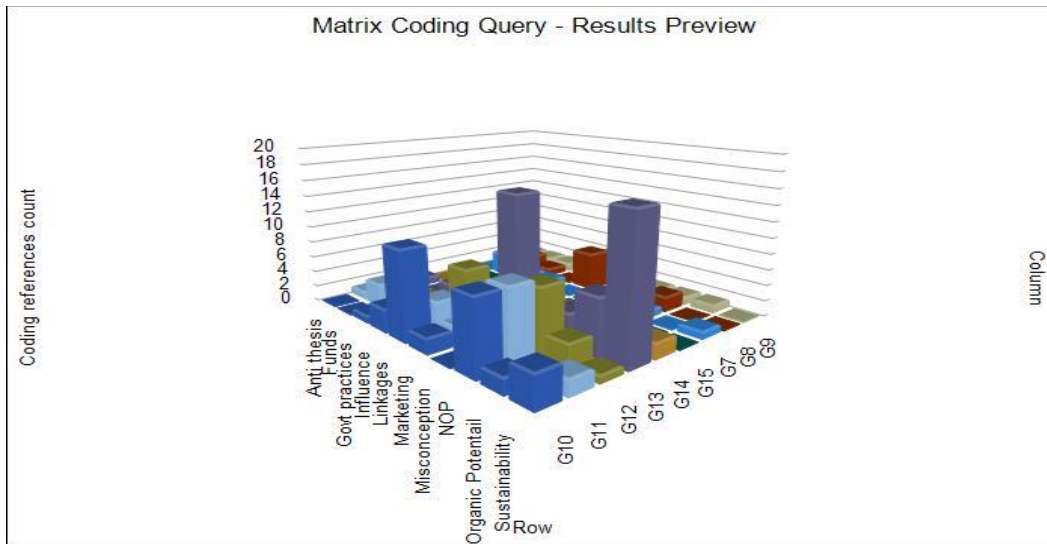
(v) Policy

(d) Matrix Coding

Respondent (1-6)



Respondent (7-15)



Organic Food Policies and Practices in Pakistan

Annex-II

Respondents	Age	Gender	Edu	Specialization	Exp	Interview date	Inducted / Location	Interview Mode
1.	58	Male	MSc	Entomology, Pakistan	35	10/3/2016	NARC	Face to face
2.	46	Male	PhD	Organic Plant Nutrition, Germany	23	17/5/2016	NARC	Face to face
3.	61	Male	PhD	Soil Fertility	26	25/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
4.	59	Male	PhD	Agronomy	31	19/5/2016	NARC	Face to face
5.	66	Male	PhD	Agriculture Economics	32	17/8/2016	MPD&R	Face to face
6.	30	Male	MSc	Political Science, English, CSS	09	30/08/2016	MNFSR	Face to face
7.	40	Male	MSc	International Relations	15	30/08/2016	MNFSR	Face to face
8.	35	Male	PhD	Agriculture Entomology	12	25/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
9.	50	Male	MSc	Agri Economics	23	25/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
10.	53	Male	PhD	Agronomy	28	17/3/2017	Rawalpindi	Face to face
11.	48	Male	MSc	Entomology	22	3/05/2016	NARC	Face to face
12.	30	Male	MB A	Marketing	08	10/05/2016	NARC	Face to face
13.	48	Male	PhD	Agriculture Economics	20	15/06/2017	AJK	Telephonic
14.	31	Female	MSc	Economics	10	17/4/2016	NARC	Face to face
15.	56	Male	PhD	Agriculture Economics	27	9/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
16.	59	Male	PhD	Agronomy	35	10/5/2016	NARC	Face to face
17.	56	Female	PhD	Biochemistry	32	17/5/16	NARC	Face to face
18.	42	Male	PhD	Entomology	17	16/8/16	PARC	Face to face
19.	57	Male	MSc	Horticulture	32	10/3/2016	NARC	Face to face
20.	63	Male	PhD	Functional Food	35	29/5/2017	PCST	Telephonic
21.	34	Male	MSc	Plant Breeding	10	3/5/2016	NARC	Face to face
22.	50	Male	MSc	Agriculture Economics	23	16/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
23.	58	Male	PhD	Planning Agri and Environment	33	16/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
24.	37	Male	MSc	Plant Protection	11	16/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
25.	36	Male	MB A	Management	12	25/8/2016	PARC	Face to face
26.	54	Male	MSc	Forestry	25	16/8/2016	MPD&R	Face to face
27.	48	Male	PhD	Agriculture Economics	18	30/8/2016	MNFSR	Face to face
28.	45	Female	PhD	Zoology	20	18/08/2016	PCST	Face to face
29.	58	Male	PhD	Agriculture Economics	35	13/07/2017	PARC	Telephonic
30.	51	Male	MSc	Economics	27	12/6/17	API	Face to face

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