

# Level of Awareness About World Trade Organization and Its Objectives in Balochistan–Pakistan

BADAR NASEEM SIDDIQUI<sup>1</sup>, NIAZ HUSSAIN MALIK<sup>‡</sup>, M.Z.Y. HASSAN<sup>‡</sup> AND AHMED SAEED KHAN<sup>¶</sup>

*Agriculture Extension, On Farm Water Management, Muslim Bagh, Balochistan–Pakistan*

<sup>‡</sup>*Departments of Agricultural Education, ‡Extension, and ¶Continuing Education, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad–38040, Pakistan*

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding author's e-mail: [abq67@yahoo.com](mailto:abq67@yahoo.com)

## ABSTRACT

A multistage-cum-random sampling technique was used to conduct this study aimed at determination of level of awareness about world trade organization (WTO) and its objectives. Samples of 355 apple growers were selected from five selected tehsil of five district of Balochistan. All the EFS working in these tehsils were selected as study respondents. In addition, a sample of 25 teaching staff from Agriculture College Baleli, Quetta and 30 researchers from ARI Quetta were also drawn by using simple random sampling technique. Data were collected through interview schedule and was analyzed with the help of SPSS. Majority (40 and 60%) of the teaching staff and researcher come to know about WTO through electronic media. About 43 and 48% of the researcher and teaching staff respondents were aware of the objective to expand the market for international business. About 43% of the researcher respondents reported that WTO will be beneficial at international level whereas, 48% of the teaching staff reported that WTO will have harmful effect at country level.

**Key Word:** Beneficial; Farmers; Harmful; WTO

## INTRODUCTION

Pakistan has signed the WTO agreements. Pakistan has already spent 8 out of 10 years grace period granted for the initial implementation of reduction commitments made under the WTO. Pakistan has only two years (up to year 2004) to implement the first phase (Naeem, 2002). As far as Pakistan is concerned, considerable expansion in agricultural output and trade may be anticipated with full and uniform implementation of WTO negotiations. Along with other exports like leather and leather made-up, spices, cut flowers, Pakistan is major exporter of tropical nuts and fruits like apple, citrus and mango, whereas, developed countries promised to reduce tariff by some 42-50% in this connection (Anonymous, 2003).

The Pakistan Standard and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) with its Food and Agriculture Division develop standards for foods and food products. The PSQCA standards are voluntary standards and these indirectly complement the implementation of Pure Food Ordinance, which is mandatory regulatory framework for the entire country.

As apple fruit production faces multifarious types of problems like apple scab, apple rot, root rot, die back and codling moth, maggot, American bollworm (*Helicoverpa armigera*) and mites etc. which requires use of chemicals for their control against them which are hazardous to human and animal ecosystem. To cope this danger the WTO maintains the standards in the form of Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary measures, impedance of hazardous chemicals, pre and post-harvest practices, export and quarantine laws, which would result in increasing obstacles in the export of

apple.

The major stakeholders in the system of agriculture extension under the umbrella of WTO are farmers, extension field staff (EFS), teaching staff and researchers. While speaking of farmers or consumers point of view, the preference of out come of complex interplay of the factors such as social values, social change, demonstration effects external factors and multi media influences and availability of product range, awareness about processed products, accessibility to outside products, product quality expectations and aesthetic value consideration. To cope with this situation, our methodologies encircles the situation, plan and execution of production programmes based on the results of research and help farmers to find out the outlets for their farm products but now we shall have to design the modalities for this kind of work in collaboration with the agricultural economists, marketing experts and agencies within the country and abroad (Sawant, 2003).

For the preparation of challenges of WTO, it is necessary to prepare the scientist and researchers. The progress and advancement of country depended on scientific knowledge and application of technical skills and efficacy. For this purpose, Government should encourage research activities in the public sector, universities with a view to raising standard of higher education and linkage with industries (Staff, 2004).

At this nick of time, only the extensionist can create awareness among the farming community about WTO agreements and its impact on their produce and exports. But it is only possible when extension field staff (EFS) are fully aware of the rules and regulations of WTO along with their advantages & disadvantages and has the ability to deliver it

**Table I. Distribution of respondent according to their sources of information regarding WTO**

Sources of information	Farmers		EFS		Teaching		Researchers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture Officer (AOs)	02	0.6	11	8.5	-	-	-	-
Field Assistant (FAs)	08	2.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Neighbours/friends	10	2.8	5	3.8	-	-	-	-
Electronic media (radio & television)	28	7.3	26	20.0	15	60.0	12	40.0
NGOs	06	1.6	5	3.8	-	-	-	-
Print media (news papers & magazines)	06	1.6	19	14.6	4	16.0	2	8.0
Private agencies	-	-	3	2.3	-	-	-	-
Seminars	-	-	2	1.5	1	4.0	-	-
Total	60	16.9	71	54.5	20	80.0	14	48.0

\*One respondents identify more than one sources

to the farming community. As apple growing areas of Balochistan are not fully developed and radio & TV broadcasts/telecasts are limited in these areas due to non-availability of electricity at their door steps, it is very difficult to develop awareness among apple growers of Balochistan province about the effect of said agreements. In this situation it is the sole responsibility of EFS of the area to create awareness among the farming community and take steps to tackle the problems in near future.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A multistage-cum-random sampling technique was used to conduct the study. Five tehsils were randomly selected from five districts of Balochistan. A comprehensive list of apple growers in the selected tehsils was prepared. Out of total 4761 apple growers from the selected tehsils, a sample of 355 farmers was selected through simple random sampling technique by using the Table used by Wunsch (1986) and Fitzgibbon *et al.* (1987). A proportionate sampling procedure was adopted for the selection of farmer respondents from each tehsil. Therefore, 63 from Killa Abdullah, 57 from Muslim Bagh, 73 from Pishin, 80 from Quetta and 82 farmers from Ziarat tehsil were selected. All the EFS working in the tehsils were also taken as study respondent. In addition, a sample of 25 teaching staff from Agriculture College Beleli, Quetta and 30 researchers from Agriculture Research Institute (ARI), Quetta were also drawn by using simple random sampling technique.

The data were collected with the help of validated (Cronbach & Paul, 1955; Phillips, 1976 & Rusin, 1983) and pre-tested interview schedules through personal interviews by the researcher himself. The data thus collected were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). For data analysis simple statistical

procedure such as frequencies, percentages were adopted.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Farmer respondents.** The respondents were asked whether or not they knew about WTO. A large majority (83.0%) of the respondents was found to be unaware, and only 17.0% of the respondents were aware of WTO. The data presented in Table I reveal that the main source of information was electronic media (radio & television) as reported by 7.3% of the respondents. Other sources were neighbours/friends (2.8%), FAs (2.3%), NGOs (1.6%) print media/newspapers (1.6%), and AOs (0.6%).

The respondents were further asked whether or not they knew the objectives of WTO. The responses of respondents indicate that objectives such as to improve the welfare of people of the member countries, to create an environment of healthy competition among the business community and to transfer and disseminate technologies to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge were known to 10.9-12.1% of the respondents (Table II).

The respondents were further asked whether or not they prepared for WTO and its implication. None of the respondents was prepared to meet the future challenges of WTO. A large majority (83.0%) of the respondents did not respond regarding the effect of WTO. However, only 10.2% of the respondents were of the view that effect of WTO would be beneficial at individual and country levels. Whereas, 6.3% of the respondents opined that WTO would be harmful both at individual and country level (Table III).

**Extension field staff respondents.** The respondents were asked whether or not they knew about WTO. A fair majority (64.7%) of the respondents was unaware about the WTO. Most (33.3%) of the respondents was aware of WTO. The data presented in Table I indicate that 20.0% of the aware respondents came to know about WTO through media (radio & television). Other sources were print media (newspapers and magazines) (14.6%), AOs (8.3%), neighbours/friends and NGOs each (3.8%), private agencies (2.3%), and seminars (1.5%).

The respondents were further asked whether or not they knew the objectives of WTO. The responses show that the objectives like to expand market for international business, to improve the welfare of people of the member countries, to transfer and disseminate technology relating to mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge were known to 22.3, 21.5, and 20.7% of the respondents respectively. The rest of the objectives of WTO

**Table II. Distribution of respondent according to their awareness about objectives of WTO**

Objectives	Farmers		EFS		Teaching		Researchers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
To improve the welfare of people of the member countries	41	11.5	28	21.5	11	44.0	11	36.7
To reduce distortion in international trade	41	11.5	25	19.2	9	36.0	10	33.3
To expand the market for international business	43	12.1	29	22.3	12	48.0	13	43.3
To standardize the business regarding quality maintenance	39	10.9	25	19.2	12	48.0	14	46.7
To create an environment of healthy competition among the business community	39	10.9	26	20.0	10	40.0	14	46.7
To transfer and disseminate technologies relating to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge	41	11.5	27	20.7	8	32.0	13	43.3

**Table III. Distribution of respondent according to their perception about the effect of WTO**

	Beneficial		Harmful		No effect		No response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Individual level</b>								
Farmers	36	10.2	24	6.8	–	–	295	83.0
EFS	20	15.3	11	8.4	–	–	99	76.1
Teaching staff	8	32.0	5	20.0	3	12.0	9	36.0
Researchers	13	43.3	1	3.3	1	3.3	15	50.0
<b>Country level</b>								
Farmers	36	10.2	24	6.8	–	–	295	83.0
EFS	21	16.1	10	7.6	–	–	99	76.1
Teaching staff	3	12.0	12	48.0	1	4.0	9	36.0
Researchers	5	16.7	6	20.0	1	3.3	18	60.0

were known to 19.2-20.0% of the respondents (Table II).

The respondents were further asked whether or not they prepared for WTO and its implication. None of the respondents was prepared to meet the future challenges of WTO. A fair majority (76.1%) of the respondents did not respond regarding the effect of WTO. A small number (15.3 and 16.1%) of the respondents were of the view that effect of WTO would be beneficial at individual and country levels respectively. Furthermore, 8.4 and 7.6% of the respondents opined that WTO would be harmful both at individual and country levels (Table III).

**Teaching staff respondents.** About 20% of the respondents was unaware about the WTO and its implications. Majority (80.0%) of the respondents was aware of WTO. The main source of information regarding WTO was electronic media (radio & television) as reported by 60.0% of the respondents. Only 16.0% of the respondents came to know through print media (Table I).

About less than half of the respondents was aware of objectives of WTO. However, the objective like to expand the market for international business, to standardized the business regarding quality maintenance and to improve the welfare of people of the member countries were known to 48.0, 48.0, and 44.0% of the respondents respectively (Table II). Moreover, the objective: to create an environment of healthy competition among the business community was known to 40.0% of the respondents. Rest of the objectives were known to 32.0-36.0% of the respondents respectively.

The respondents were further asked whether or not they prepared for WTO and its implication. None of the respondents was prepared to meet the future challenges of WTO. As regard the effect of WTO, most (32.0%) of the respondents were of the view that WTO would be beneficial at individual level. Only 12.0% of the respondents was in a view that WTO effect would be beneficial at country level. A lesser number (12.0-4.0%) of the respondents disclosed that WTO will have no effect at individual and country level respectively (Table III).

**Researcher respondents.** The respondents were asked whether or not they knew about WTO. Slightly above than half (52.0%) of the respondents was found to be unaware of WTO. Majority (63.2%) of the respondents was come to

know about WTO through electronic media (radio & television). Only 12.5% of the respondents were disclosed that print media (newspaper, magazines) was the source of information regarding WTO for them (Table I).

The objectives of WTO like to standardize the business regarding quality maintenance, to create an environment of healthy competition among the business community, to expand the market for international business, and to transfer and disseminate technologies relating to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge were known to 46.7, 46.7, 43.3, and 43.3% of the respondents respectively (Table II). Other objectives were known by a lesser number (33.3-36.7%) of the respondents.

The respondents were further asked whether or not they prepared for WTO and its implication. None of the respondents was prepared to meet the future challenges of WTO. A less than half (43.3%), and 16.7% of the respondents were of the view that the effect of WTO would be beneficial both at individual and country levels respectively (Table III). Whereas, 20.0 and 3.3% of the respondents opined that effect of WTO would be harmful both at individual and country levels. Only 3.3% of the respondents were disclosed that WTO would have no effect both at individual and country levels (each).

**CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded from the above findings that majority of respondents was not familiar with the WTO and its objectives and was not prepared to cope with future challenges ahead to compete the global market. They needed to know about WTO and its objectives and prepare themselves as well as farmers of their areas.

**REFERENCES**

Anonymous, 2003. *Call to Create Awareness About WTO Agreements*. The Daily Dawn, 19, April, 2003.  
 Cronbach, L.J. and E.M. Paul, 1955. Construct validity in Psychological tests. *Psychol. Bull.*, 52: 281–302  
 Fitzgibbon, C. Taylor and L.L. Morris, 1987. *How to Design a Program Evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.  
 Phillips, B.S., 1976. *Social Research, Strategies and Tactics*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. New York.  
 Rusin, H.J., 1983. *Applied Social Research*. Ohio, USA: A bell and Howell Company.  
 Sawant, A.G., 2003. Agribusiness and extension management. In: Hansra, B.S. and K. Vijayaragawan, (eds.). *Concept Publishing Co.* pp. 1–7. New Delhi  
 Staff, 2004. *Scientists Urged to Prepare for WTO Challenges*. p. 18. Daily Dawn. September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2004.  
 Wunsch, D.R., 1986. Forum feature: Action Research in Business Education. *Business Education Forum.*, 5: 31–4

(Received 10 January 2005; Accepted 20 March 2005)