

## **The Issue of Food Security in the Middle East**

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**ABSTRACT:** The Food Security issue has caught the attention of Global community due to the political, economic and humanitarian issues involved in it. As Middle East is located in a highly geo-strategic location, therefore, political instability in the region affects the global trade. Food Security paradigm is related to agricultural produce and distribution network. Domestic production is also a concern because of the climatic concerns which is very harsh at times. New scientific methodology has helped to some extent in improving the scenario. We see the prevailing of dry land agriculture for the purpose of sustenance. At the co-operative level too, initiatives are being taken for agriculture and production. Civil Society can participate in various development measures including agrarian activity and marketing prospects. Moreover, water harvesting measures can be improved by the civil society participants along with government participants. Overall, the cultural and regional dimension plays a very crucial role in agrarian scenario. Food Security issues are also connected with the same facets and a stable geo- political order would help in trading aspects for development ethics.

**KEYWORDS:** Food Security, Global Community, geo- strategic, agricultural produce, distribution network, civil society, cultural, trading aspects.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

The regional perspective of the Middle Eastern region is very significant due to the weather conditions prevailing and the water scarcity issue. In the past, we see several drought conditions which became harsh for the farmers and the businessmen. In the present-day context, we see improvement methodology being adopted for the agricultural development. Water preservation measures and the development of seasonal variable seeds have provided the technology to deal with the weather conditions. Present day technology has the capacity to turn orient the scenario to some extent. We should see that region-specific mechanisms are being adopted for the development of farming in the region. Capacity building issue is holding a lot of potential in this regard. Geographic Information System has provided the ground work for several agricultural aspects along with other technological information.

Availability of food is another major issue that has been discussed by the Food and Agricultural Organisation. It is here that export and import issue come into forefront. Let us talk how imports in the past have dealt with the food scarcity issue, in the Middle Eastern Realm. Here, much of the imports are grains and livestock for the sustenance of demography in the Middle East. As the population grows, new measures are supposed to be adopted.

The productivity and the distribution aspects also become crucial as we know that measures within the economic parameters determine the growth aspects. Regions like Yemen and Egypt has seen the food security issue in harsh parameters due to the import handlings. Now, there is much need to improve the food insecurity, as the same brings nothing but problems and other unexpected issues. The issue of Trade Creation and Trade diversion can be discussed in this context. Study of the resources and the parameters for growth can be helpful in this regard.

**LITERARY REVIEW:** According to scholars like Mehran Kamrava and Zahra Babar, both macro level study on food security and micro level analysis crucial for the Middle Eastern context. Political reasons, economic measures and societal analysis combined altogether bring up the issue of food security in the region. According to scholars like Eckart Woertz, the import measures become crucial for the food security in the region. The scholar has studied the impact on Gulf Countries, Mashreq and Egypt. The Global food crises of 2008 led to high inflationary trends which have been studied by the scholar. According to Jane Harrigan, agricultural issues are important because of the three dimensions of domestic production, commercial food imports and International food aids. The scholar emphasizes certain socio- political factors. According to Habibolah Salami, Toktam Mohtashami and Mohammad Saeid Noori Naeimi, increase in supply of foods is essential for demographic reasons. Respected scholars also talk for the development of agriculture which could

lead to income generation. Small farmers and middle-income group can be particularly benefitted through this kind of activity. Many important scholars have talked about the process of Institutionalization for the process of development. Other renowned scholars have talked about supermarket transition which is a new phenomenon in the Region at macro- economic level. The marketing and the distribution aspects become very significant here.

#### **INVESTMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE UTILITY:**

Investment opportunity is also important for the issue of food security and price stability. The Foreign Policy initiatives determine many of the investment climates, and there are other factors which determine the macroeconomic sectors. The present-day context sees the divergence of trade in order to move towards a stable economic order. The agricultural investment is one of the best investment arenas as it is related with the traditional and globalized paradigms. There are other industries like the food processing industry which have brought up the backward forward linkage to new heights. Processing units become very crucial in this regard and there is the issue of development of human resources.

Climate Change is having a strong impact on the cropping pattern and in the recent times, we see the use of technological measures in order to deal with the same. Traditional agricultural methods are very useful as it the potential to sustain the water level and indigenous plant varieties. But food security measures at times, require huge stockpiles in order to deal with the variant conditions. Hybrid varieties of seeds can be helpful in this regard. Innovative mechanisms could be adopted in order to hold the accumulative strength of food grains. Meanwhile, we should also see our traditional varieties are safe and cultural values are intact at the same time. The issue of gender and food security is also much talked today for certain values associated with the same. When we talk about the household productivity, we see that women participate a lot in the domestic farming. The involvement of the male members of the family further raises the household productivity. We have to see that self-sufficiency measures are being carried properly at the household level.

Today, we see the genetically modified crops are there in the market in order to maintain the food security issue. The different GM varieties are maize, cotton seeds, canola and eggplant. The issue is that how safe are these GM crops for human health and consumption? The safety standards if maintained then the GM crops are given for the consumption in order to deal with the population dynamics today. The major consumption has been taking place in United States of America, South East Asia and China. Population pattern is determining many issues as consumption and distribution are interrelated processes. In China also we see the increasing demand of processed food for the aspects related to marketing and population pattern. The demographic dividend is a major concern in all the developing Countries today. Middle East also has certain aspects related to the issue of demographic dividend. Here, Resource development mechanism can be a crucial determinant for growth and development. The regional pattern of the population distribution can be studied for further benefit and development ethics.

#### **CASE STUDY ON POLITICO- ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ETHICS OF MIDDLE EASTERN REALM:**

Political instability in the Middle Eastern Scenario is one of the reasons for the volatility in price issue. The recent years have shown how food security issue has been affected by the price rise. We also see the inflationary trends in the Middle Eastern realm which has further affected the poor farmer and middle-income group people. The food security issue is very crucial as it is related to sustainability and resource utilisation. In regions of Yemen and Saudi Arabia, we see the political issue affecting the food security quite severely. Jordan has taken some steps to improve the scenario, and the same methodology can be helpful for sustaining the food security issue. Political intervention, if takes the stand in favour of the poor farmers then we can visualize some stability in the price issue. Development is needed but a sustainable development is the desired issue. Again, the stability in the government mechanism can also be helpful for the people living in the Middle East.

Let us talk about the main agricultural productivity that takes place in the Middle Eastern Region. Wheat and Pulses are the main crops as it is an arid region, further some fruits and vegetables are also grown side by side. In this scenario, we see that there are vegetables like tomato and melons which can be grown in the soil of desert region. Once again, we see that sustainable agriculture has also been quite successful because of its natural measures. Productivity can also be increased by using the bio fertilizers and there is ample scope for using the pastoral land in the cultivation of vegetables. It can be done by creating small units for using the pastoral land in the cultivation of vegetables. Manures can be gotten from the pastoral land itself which is quite economic by nature. In the recent times, we see grape vines grown quite significantly in the Middle Eastern region. Actually, the climatic conditions matter a lot for the cultivation of grapes. Export of this food item is also beneficial for the farmers of the region.

Cultural and regional concerns are also very important to notice when we analyze the agricultural pattern of any region. It is seen that pastoral communities are quite thriving in the Middle Eastern region. Therefore, the development of livestock is much needed for the farming specific activities. The society is also very much in sync with such kind of activity. We see that meat production and trading in fur can be done quite

successfully with the development of livestock. Mixed farming is another very good option for the development of agricultural activities. In mixed farming we see the farming of animals along with cultivation of crops. This measure is successful because it provides lot of opportunity for the farmers. Pastoral community can be particularly benefited through this kind of activity. We also see many oases in the desert region of the Middle East. Oases are natural sources of water and food production. In the Middle Eastern region, we see that figs, olives, dates are produced along with crops like barley and wheat. The cultural ethics of the region is also very much interrelated with the oases and its sustenance. Trading aspects apparently is improved through the connectivity gotten from these regions.

#### **CIVIL SOCIETY AND ITS IMPORTANCE:**

Civil Society participation is seen in the Middle Eastern context; sustainable measures have been adopted in order to improve the scenario. We see NGO and INGO participation; these are taking part in the rehabilitation measures for food and shelter. The Middle Eastern Countries has also been dealing with harsh weather conditions. Geographic Information System has been dealing with the same. The soil study mechanism has also been scientifically designed and it is for the development in the agricultural issues that NGO participation becomes necessary. Particularly, the issue of Sustainable Development Goals of 2030 has been adhering to the theme of development and cooperation. We also notice that Civil Society can help the small farmers and the middle-income group farmers. The agricultural field activity and the plantation activity can be taken up by the Civil Society members. ANERA (American Near East Refugee Aid) is a very important Civil Society group that has worked significantly in the Middle Eastern realm. ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) is also working in the societal context as development is the concern in the present-day context. The work of GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating in the context of Middle East. The Council has taken up initiative for trade, customs and administration. Further, they are also taking up agricultural and sustainable measures. Actually, cooperation and trade creation are very helpful in the Middle Eastern scenario.

Civil Society can also take part in the decision-making process for the development purpose. As we said that cooperative and lively activities can help the small farmers to raise their productivity. They have their issues regarding the seeds, storage, water harvesting and marketing. All these issues can be very well defined by the civil society and a peaceful scenario can be created. As political instability in the region is creating problems at times, international cooperation can be helpful in this regard. Cooperative activity can also be very useful in the upcoming stages of agricultural development. Job creation and better storage units can also be developed from the same. Regional study is essential in the present-day context for the productivity and infrastructure issue. The spatial analysis can inform us about the topographical conditions and help us to formulate better policy. In the present times, the Civil Society has been playing integrating role in regional development and administrative ethics.

#### **II. CONCLUSION:**

In Conclusion, it can be said that Food Security is a very crucial issue in the Middle Eastern context. We have to analyse the political conditions of the region in order to know about the economic issues. Import substitution is a major issue in the Middle Eastern realm and there are several hypotheses relating to the same. We see that the imports have been increasing due to unstable political conditions. Scholars, on the other hand are talking about the household production. This measure is important for certain reasons like vegetable cultivation and orchard development. But at the higher level, civil society participation can help in the agricultural productivity and feeding the growing populations. Statistical measures can also be helpful in this regard for the formulation of better agricultural policy. Self-sufficiency is important as we know domestic conditions and marketing aspects determine many of the economic issues. The location of Middle East is also very crucial for trading purposes. So, we can say that international trade possibly will prosper with the new geopolitical context. Trade and International cooperation have always been the core issue of economic development. Food Security in the Middle East can be stabilised with trade, innovation and sustainable agricultural methods.

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