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Agriculture: The Heart for Trade Growth, Development and Sustainability

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Abstract: Agriculture and trade are part of the economic activities that require strategic support decisions if a country is to grow and develop and achieve a sustainable living for people. This article offers a summary and critical evaluation of Sotelo Sebastian's article (2020), about domestic trade frictions and agriculture. It reflects upon the standard trade theory and it applies to agriculture and trade for a country. The article also makes an analysis of the drivers of agriculture and trade in Peru. The country's geographical location, trade liberalization policy, trade shocks, specialization for crops, competitive advantage leverage, and infrastructure are examined in detail. It is emphasized that subsistence agriculture can be a step forward in the shift towards commercial agriculture, business, and trade with other countries. It is noted that agriculture has the potential to develop a given country only when there is a political–will by governments to support the sector with subsidies. The agricultural sector is vulnerable to natural and artificial conditions that affect yields and farming activities. It is concluded that trade liberalization supports economic activities in a global business environment, infrastructural development supports economic activities, and governments have an obligation to make good infrastructure policies so that there are increased trading activities and reduced trade costs. Societal and people's well-being is dependent on the degree of agriculture and trade and access to ports by a country is an added advantage for international trade engagement and the access to international markets opens gates for economic, social, technological, and environmental related benefits.

Keywords: *Trade Liberalization, Infrastructural Development, Agricultural Sectors, Subsistence Agriculture, Land use and Allocation.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture and trade are intertwined economic activities that serve to enhance the social, economic, political, technological, and environmental growth and development of the country (Pellegrina, 2022). The developing countries most especially have had agriculture as the back-borne for their economic stimulation and development of their people. It is however noted that the enhancement of these two economic sectors goes with the political decisions of those in the national, regional, and local leadership of a country. The aspect of international trade is also dependent on the degree to which Governments endeavor to stimulate agriculture and trade among the international and native people of their respective countries (Balci & Surucu-Balci, 2021). It is also true that poor countries base on agriculture with the production of agricultural output as raw materials sold to the developing countries to have a fair balance of trade (Pawlak & Kołodziejczak, 2020). The decision regarding policy frameworks set by governments based on bilateral or multi-lateral agreements serves to support trade and agriculture for the member states that strive to achieve the best outcomes for their countries development.

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➢ *Theory Application-"Standard Trade Theory"*

The development of frameworks and utilization of theories supports findings in a study. Sotelo (2020) also like any other author adopted a theory as well as several frameworks. He used the standard trade theory to present the best illustration of the land-based data concerning allocations and productivity. This theory, therefore, offered the production possibility and the relative supply curve relationship for farmers with land allocation for the various crops. It is so argued that the application of this theory also implies that there was a relationship between measurement for prices and demand relationship. It is, therefore, noted that this would determine the supply and demand requirements for the different markets for Peru and lead to the best allocation of resources to meet such requirements/needs. In addition, since, the country deals with the world market, it would assist to ascertain the world-based equilibrium as per the world's relative demand and supply to be able to satisfactorily serve the world market opportunities. I strongly believe the choice of this theory brought out the best understanding of costs and choices made by farmers in Peru through the treatment of factors as distinctive aspects and the corresponding decisions for implementation.

➢ *The Country-Peru*

Sotelo's articles present Peru as a developing country that has used agriculture and trade to achieve sustainable change in the livelihoods of her people. The country used agriculture as the main economic activity that also supported trade investments and outcomes for national development. It is, therefore, noted that Peru as a country has managed to achieve prosperity and development from the engagements of agriculture and trade.

The standards of living for the people both urban and rural in Peru have not remained the same following the two economic activities undertaken. It is, however, evaluated that the political landscape of Peru has been the instrument to enhance the two economic activities for sustainable trade and development. The use of agriculture as the source for raw materials generated as agricultural produces has served to stimulate employment, incomes, and consumption behaviors of the local natives. It is thus noted that Peru can be a good example for any other country that seeks to develop its economy through agriculture and trade.

Peru being a middle-income country is enough to reflect the degree of development of such a country. It is thus, critical to assert that the country has the best establishment for international markets links where agricultural products are sold. The country is geographically located to have the best trade and business undertaking for national development. The engagement of farmers in trade within Peru is a gesture for improved incomes for people thus a declaration of being a middle-income country.

II. ARTICLE ANALYSIS

Sebastian Sotelo wrote a good article about domestic trade friction and agriculture which required that one summarizes and critically offer the best evaluation of its content. It is, therefore, stated that the information presented below is reflective of the content that was presented by this author regarding the guidelines provided to accomplish this term paper assignment. It though stated that the analysis of the article by Sotelo (2020) is carried out with a reflection on the perspective that agriculture is the heart of the country's growth, development, and sustainability through trade activities at micro and macro levels. In terms of analysis, this article title and that of Sotelo offer the best approaches through which governments can achieve the best from agriculture, this is because it presents the challenges and strategies by which governments or societies can leap the best out of the two economic activities. The summary and analysis of the article by Sotelo (2020) have been based on themes (key points) derived from the information the author provided.

➢ *Subsistence Agriculture*

Developing countries are prone to the practice of substance farming and production. As stated in the article by Setelo (2020), home consumption indeed supersedes commercial agriculture and production. This can, therefore, curtail trade with other countries since there will be no exchange of goods for monetary gains. It is, therefore, stated that subsistence agriculture requires reforms and government support to enable the local population/farmers to adopt technology and extensive farming methods to revamp the agricultural sector. It is, therefore, stated that from the articles review, commercial farming is the pillar for international trade and development of countries without which the country's economy is to remain poor.

The article provides that farmers' and consumers' reactions and gains from subsistence agriculture/farming will differ always and therefore, the level of production under subsistence farming would only promote rural people being poorer, only producing for consumption, and the urban-based people will not be in a position to access agricultural produces. The content as provided, therefore, points out that there will be more poverty among people since there is no meaningful engagement in trade but rather consumption at the household level of all that has been produced. The income gaps might, therefore, widen further among the rural-based dwellers, and for the urban-based people shortage of food, and supplies might continue to last.

Further, the information in this article represents that the terms of payment and balance of trade for the country are partly contributed by the degree to which agricultural activities and produce' transactions are carried out by the people. The exports of agricultural goods and services for part of the trading aspects of the government to the local, regional and international markets.

➢ *Infrastructural Development and Subsistence Agriculture*

The reviewed article by Sotelo (2002) has provided the best empirical evidence with statistics on infrastructural development for roads, production centers, and ports. These have been presented as fundamental to the enhancement of agriculture and trade. The exploitation of local, regional and

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international markets has been well linked to the degree to which infrastructure is set. It has been well presented that traders always base on infrastructure to have their business activities and transactions accomplished. It is, therefore, provided by the author-Sotelo (2020) that engagement in subsistence agricultures would also curtail the development of infrastructures such as roads, processing plants, employment, and income improvement among the local natives. This is also a threat to national and international development.

The well-established infrastructure will indeed provide the best transportation networks by road, railway, or port to enhance trade and development. It is thus critical to state that the content of Sotelo's article about infrastructure, makes the country exploit internal and external business opportunities and markers for national development. The infrastructure-related shocks serve to improve the transport system of the country and the costs related to domestic/internal-country trade will drastically fall. It also implies that there will be good mobility for the factors of production including the agricultural produces across places for development advantages.

The more people and goods are moving, the higher will be the circulation of money in the economy for sustainable trade and development.

- *Quality of Infrastructure*

It has been indicated that the advancement of agriculture is linked to the quality of roads. In Peru, it has been well presented that there has been enhanced transportation of produce as a result of the establishment of good roads. In addition, the quality of roads varied considerably across Peru's regions. It is, however, noted that the road systems provided in Peru are an example of the exploitation of markets and all possible potentials for business. The policy on roads in Peru as provided point out that there was a Government-will to revamp the roads sector for the betterment of trade and people's livelihoods. The policy on roads and infrastructural development was well established and best practices were carried out to achieve success in terms of increased good roads and highways in Peru. This denotes that the country-Peru and its government were determined to reduce all trade-related costs that would curtail trade and agriculture. This serves as a lesson to developing countries most especially in Africa where road networks are poor and high cases of corruption witnessed each day with its effects of curtailing development.

- *Ports' Proximity and Geographical Location*

Trade across countries is supported by the country's location geographically as well as its proximity. Regarding the article Sotelo (2020) reveals that in Peru, the growth of trade and agriculture was dependent on the degree to which ports are proximate to farmers and agricultural products traders in a country. This analysis implies that ports will ease the movement of goods and people to enhance business with favorable prices for production. It is also stated that soil fertility and good weather are also components of a good geographical location of a country. Therefore, Peru is in a good position to have more land acreage allocated for farming since the land is adequately fertile and with good weather for farming and trade activities.

The aspects of proximity serve to reduce trade costs in terms of movement for goods and services. Given the increasing prices for fuel globally, it is, therefore, stated that such a country would at least be an advantage as it is near to the markets and the goods and services can readily reach such markets. It is, therefore, noted that for crops that Peru trades with other countries, financial returns would be better as transportation costs reduce. In addition, information designates that the market consumption of such goods and services will be enhanced. Further, in terms of analysis, the country's geography is facilitative to the production of crops sold on the market. The advantage of specialization is largely supported by the geography of Peru.

Concerning good weather, it is reported that China's manufacturing industries had to be concentrated in bigger production geographical locations (Faber, 2014). This implies that with Peru, the ports and the economic activities therein would be best situated in places that would result in positive financial outcomes/returns such as improved sales, revenue, and high numbers of customers. With this, the argument is, that it is good to allocate the best resources where the best returns will be achieved.

➢ *Agricultural and Trade Decisions and Policies*

Following the article's content as provided by Sotelo, Peru as a country has been a pointer to the best decision-making and policy development and framework setting to enhance both trade and agriculture. This, therefore, symbolizes that any outcomes from such activities require strategic thinking and analysis of the inputs and outputs required to achieve the best market deliverables and achievements. It is, however, noted that this requires the best budgetary allocation each financial year with increased agricultural skills and modern technology being provided to farmers in communities of the country. It is, therefore, at the discretion of the government to modernize agriculture, especially in developing countries.

It is noted that the agricultural sector like any other sector requires investments for good performance results. Based on the information by Sotelo (2020) any country that needs to develop its economy should start with developing the agriculture sector. This requires that governments have to provide adequate budgetary allocations and come up with the best laws for land and its ownership as well as other needed resources. This is because in a country where land conflicts and wrangles exist, there is engagement in farming and therefore, people will not best utilize such a factor of production and a lot of funds will be spent by the government to feed a non-productive population. This is contrary to the provisions of Sotelo's (2020) article concerning Peru and the residents. Strong policies need to be put in place, therefore, for the different land tenure systems since land is the main factor of production where agriculture and trade thrive.

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Following the content from the provided articles, it means that any policies from the government from a micro and macro perspective should serve to support both agriculture and trade across geographical places. It is also key to note that for any country or government to benefit from both economic activities stimulation packages should be made for both. This is because agricultural activities and production feed trade on the other side through the provision of raw materials and production of finished goods. It is also critically pointed out that policies for strengthened agriculture and trade sectors would also require subsidies being provided to the players and actors most especially when hardships are faced. It is of recent that countries faced COVID-19 which paralyzed business in most countries. Therefore, this requires that governments come up with stimulus packages to boost agriculture and trade in the other economic sectors of the country.

As mentioned by the Sotelo, it is the government's policies to determine trade and infrastructure development as well as the welfare of the natives. With this theme, therefore, it is noted that increased expenditure on infrastructures such as ports, roads, and ICT facilities will enhance innovations, research, and training of the local people on how best to exercise farming and trade for national development. Policies about taxation of agricultural produce will also support the development of this sector and trade. Market creation by government policies will support and motivate farmers in rural areas to engage more in agriculture leading to improved incomes and production for commercial purposes.

- *Agricultural Produces' Prices*

It is well-known that agricultural products are perishable and therefore, these require the best technological facilities to make them stay longer on market (Li, Messer & Kaiser, 2020). Sotelo (2020) has presented that while undertaking agriculture, prices for the produces affect the producers amidst the competition from the developed countries. This symbolizes that there will be demotivation for the farmer are they harvest their produce at low market prices. This is an economic bottleneck to the development of agriculture and trade since it discourages production and keeps farmers in a vicious circle of poverty. It is, therefore, stated that agricultural price stability measures are required to be set by Governments that depend on farming for economic development.

This is because low prices for agricultural produces imply low incomes to farmers and no trade prosperities. As mentioned in the article, it is also true that consumption prices can help to enhance good welfare of people-farmers inclusive. But is it wise to note that welfare improvement is dependent on the prices by which agricultural products are sold. It also noted that from the high prices, the government will be able to levy taxes on traders and farmers for national development.

It has been presented by the article that in Peru, there are price differences based on regions and this comes with implications for the advancement of economic activities, more so, trade and agriculture. It has been also indicated that price changes affect the production level of farmers and traders. This is an indication that low prices will slow down business and higher prices for goods and services will simply lead to increased business undertakings. It is also logical that principles of demand and supply will interplay to determine the levels of trade and business carried out in the country and outside the country. The responses to the prices will, therefore, always focus on how best crops and substituted production as the case has been presented in Peru.

The aspect that high prices were common in urban places as compared to rural areas is simply a pointer that there will be more engagement in farming and exports will increase. It has also been reported that port-based consumers tend to experience high prices as compared to others and this affects non-agricultural employees. This information implies that the consumption of such dwellers makes prices go high as they gain higher consumption of cereal agricultural produces. In terms of marketing, this implies that there will be higher sales and revenue but there is a need to come up with customer-retention strategies to keep such a market.

Concerning this article, it is argued that such strategies can be increased customer care, after-sales services, and improved quality of items sold. It is also argued that there are larger spatial variations regarding farm gate as well as consumer prices for produces which determines the degree of production among the different sections of farmers and traders.

- *Trade Shocks and their Measurement*

In business, it is good to keep records, and therefore the best records management for business partly contributes to business growth and development (Hawash et al, 2020). It is from the article by Sotelo (2020) that there has been the use of Peru-based data for trade shocks and these have been well elaborated to reflect their impact on trade and agriculture. It is, therefore, true that as per the article such shocks would come with implications over trade. The exercise of analyzing and measuring such shocks as indicated by the author Sotelo would best offer vivid information on how trade and farming would be smoothly implemented. The price shocks, for example, indicate the best understanding of markets with the best analysis of key factors present such as roads, technology, and ports.

The shocks- related facts per Peru as presented including price disparities and farmers' allocation of land to crops best reflect how farming thrives in such a country. This thus points out that governments and individual farmers must rethink and act per the shock's situation for the betterment of their economic activities. It is not true that such shocks will be absent in an economy but rather, it is good to come up with the best interventions to deal with them. It is also argued that developing a framework to measure the available shocks is the best strategy to get the positive and negative impacts derived from shocks towards the sector and sector players.

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➢ *Mixed Farming and Revenue Variance per Unit of Land*

The article by Sotelo (2020) offers that in Peru, mixed farming is adopted and there has been better land utilization. This has however come up with variations in terms of revenue earned as per each of the unit land occupied. This concerning farming implies that there is better land utilization and efforts are in place to evaluate the benefits in terms of monetary terms for the development of the country. It is also true that corporations are allocated different land acreages and this can be made the best records keeping in terms of yields and financial gains for the farmers. Larger farmers in Peru most especially in the coastal places would serve to enable farmers to gain more yields as per each land unit allocated. The aspect of mixed farming would symbolize better land utilization and conservation for future farming practices.

- *Variety of Crops Grown*

It has been provided by the article that cereals and non-cereal crops are grown. These range from maize, potatoes, rice, and wheat among others as presented in Table 7. This implies that the weather could favor the growing of such varieties and the market would be supplied with different crop varieties. In terms of purchase, consumers would, therefore, have the best choices over which produces to buy and consume. About agriculture, this is an added advantage as the soils of Peru can contribute to yields each agricultural season. At household levels, consumption of such products would improve eating habits and the health of the population. It would also lead to food security at the household level. This can lead to good health, improved incomes at the household level, and economic sustainability through agriculture. The production chain can also be improved with non-interruptive agricultural activities in the country such as Peru. It is, however, noted that in Peru, some regions tend to grow many crops as compared to others as they focus on trends and price changes for foreign markets. This presents such farmers as speculative in the way they carry out business.

➢ *Agricultural Inputs and Markets Availability in Peru*

Agriculture and trade thrive on markets and inputs. Peru as a country has been presented by Sotelo (2020) as a country that enjoys the availability of agricultural inputs and markets for the produces. This is a good point and it works to the advantage of this country and its national development through trade and agriculture. As stated before that agricultural products are perishable, markets need to be readily available and so are the inputs to produce the best qualities and quantities required at the market. So, it is argued that access to markets serves as leverage for farmers in Peru to exploit positive economic gains for their business and survival.

The farmers and any other players in agricultural outputs have to be in a position to satisfy the demands of the market. It is, therefore, pointed out that the supply needs to be adequate. It is also noted that from the evidence as per the articles, the effect of accessing markets requires to be ascertained through developing models to determine the degree of productivity and welfare for the people. In some developing countries, such as Uganda, agricultural inputs and scarce and of poor quality. Indeed, the international markets prefer organic agricultural produces. This is a practice and an indication that a country had a concern for animal and environmental sustainability. It is also noted that the labor supply was environmentally linked to the natural endowments of Peru.

It is also presented in the article that in Peru, not all crops are traded within the home regional market. This implies that the country benefits from distant markets at an international level to obtain foreign earnings. The regions in Peru have gained regional market shares that make them stand firm in terms of revenue shares and benefits. The information provided gives the implications that market availability is for development but strategies need to be in place to exploit such potential and opportunities related to the market. Good road networks serve to enhance the production of crops.

➢ *Comparative Advantage and Specialization for Peru*

Economic growth, development, and sustainability relate to comparative advantage for a country in a given economic activity (Costinot, Donaldson & Smith, 2016). It is through that one country will specialize in what it can do or produce best. Then leave the rest of the economic activities to others, however, the aspect of climate change required more discussion in the article by Sotelo (2020). For Peru, it has been presented that the country has a comparative advantage in terms of its economic activities. This has been highlighted as leverage for the improved shares for revenue and land. It is thus, an analysis that Peru has the potential to specialize in farming and trade activities for the development of the country. So, trade among regions and countries for Peru awaits all the actors in the agriculture and trade sectors. This further implies more revenue for the government to invest in developmental projects such as infrastructural development in this country.

Table 1 Regions Average Revenue Shares for Crops Production

Crop	**Average**
Potato	17.06
Coffee	15.54
Maize	10.05
Alfalfa	9.59
Wheat	7.01

Source: Sotelo (2020)

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Table 1. Indicates that high and increased reduction of trade costs in Peru increases exports for agricultural produces with an average reduction of potatoes being 17.06, coffee 15.54, maize 10.05, Alfalfa (9.59). This information, therefore, implies that as average costs reduce, crop production will go up holding other factors constant. This also symbolizes that trade will increase with other countries on a global basis. Increased and improved production increases supply and this satisfaction of the markets.

$$V_i = \frac{\phi i_{Hi}}{\gamma i}$$

With the application of a formula, this formula denotes that the averages cost share within a specific region is dependent on the revenue share of the crop being grown. Therefore, this represents that different crops being grown will attract different cost shares and it rests upon the government and farmers to set the best strategies for the best utilization of land resources through crops growing for steady supplies and meeting demand.

➢ *Trade Costs*

It has been presented by the article that in Peru, there has been a reduction in trade costs as a result of specialization and therefore, this enhances trade in this country. The increase in the employees' real incomes is also achieved in Peru due to reducing trade costs. This is therefore a symbol that such reductions increase consumption of goods and services in the country and thus, attaining improved welfare for the local people in the country. The country Peru also gets insulated from international market shocks that would instead prevent people from engaging in business activities. It is provided that the construction of roads for example; led to a 05 percent trade cost reduction in Peru, with improved welfare of farmers and 0.02 percent of farmers' income improvement. It is at this point that one states that more advantages from the trade costs serve to improve trade and development of the country.

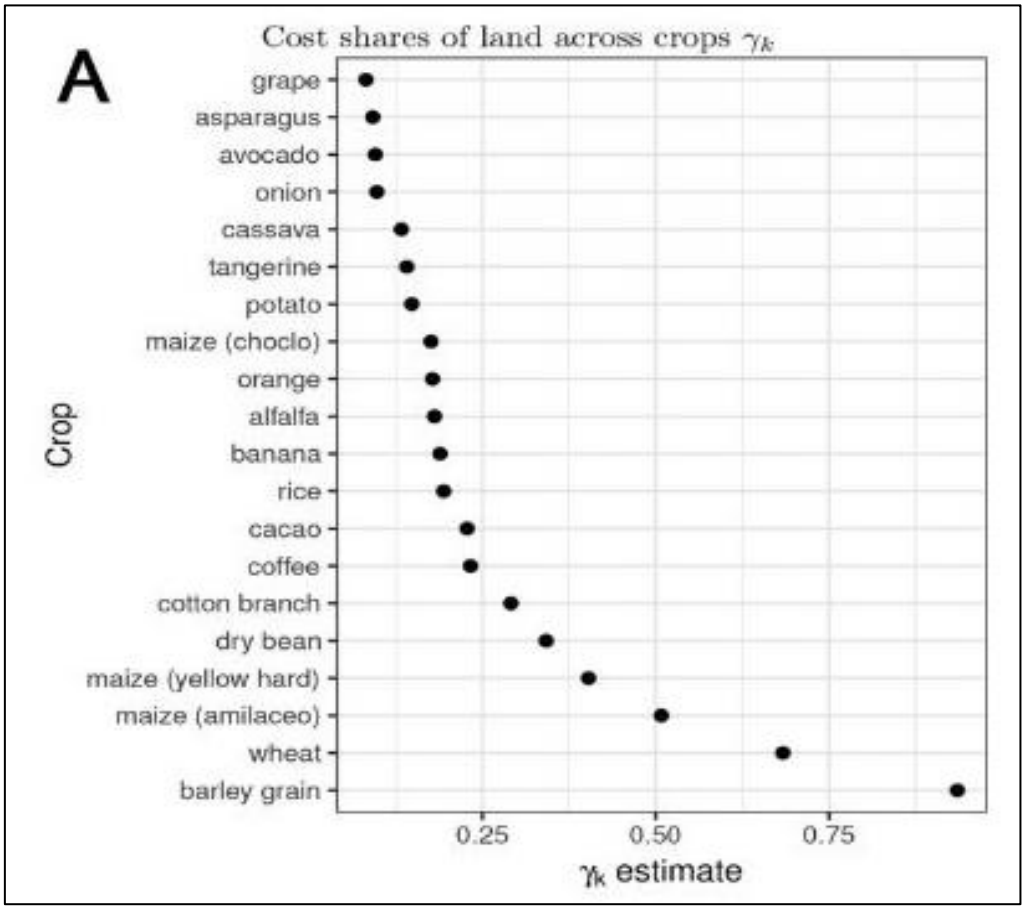


Fig 1 Cost Share of Land across Crops
Source: Sotelo. (2020)

Figure 1 shows that there are differences in terms of costs and cost-sharing which affect land utilization in Peru. Grapes of one of the crops with the lowest estimate at 0.25 and Barley with the highest at above 0.75. This information points out that the production of agricultural produces increases with increased land allocations.

➢ *Demand and Supply Elasticity*

In business management, the elasticity of demand and supply serves to reflect changes in quantities demanded or supplied due to a given change in the prices (Lippert, Feuerbacher & Narjes, 2021). It is also true that these determine the degree of supply and demand for a given commodity in a market. Following the article content, an

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equation was used to measure the demand elasticity. This implies that trade and agriculture would move with the best information regarding how the best supply and demand needs are met by farmers in Peru. It is, therefore, stated that the move to calculate the supply and demand levels would best lead to investment decisions by farmers and traders. The crops grown would, therefore, be a reflection of the figures and percentage for demand and supply in the country. The productivity estimates therein would also offer insights for production decisions.

- *Land Allocation and Use*

Given the natural and geographical endowments for Peru, farmers allocate different land for different crops as per the national data presented by Sotelo (2020). Such information indeed informs the next course of action in terms of investment in land. An agricultural sector development would require the best land allocations. Such a move would support mixed farming as the case is in Peru. It is thus noted that the stated allocation offers the best statistics on the level of yields per unit of land that a farmer allocates for crops. I strongly argue that this would support any other investment decisions for the inputs and output from the farm. The notion of comparative advantage as stated below also links to how best land is allocated and utilized for agriculture or any other economic activities. The land allocation under a specific crop average price would assist to determine profits for farmers and this leads to other decisions related to investment and taxation by Government.

- *Technology and Agriculture*

It was also presented that technology has implications for agriculture and this was related to land allocations and quantities. In the same article, it was revealed that technology was applied in growing crops. Fig 2 offers the best estimations of technologies and the scale of production that were presented. I agree with the author that technology is required in farming and its application would increase production, quality, and quantities. Peru like any other country, through its farmers, would, therefore, ascertain the variations for the lagers fractions with the basis of data. The degree of technology application would thus be based on such findings for better performance. The constant yields to scale from all agricultural activities would reflect the investment decisions. It also argued that poor transportation technologies in agriculture would offer a limitation in terms of investment as well as utilization of the other factors of production such as land and labor.

III. CONCLUSION

The article by Sotelo (2020) offered delightful insights into trade and agriculture in Peru. Trade liberalization serves to support the different economic activities in a global business environment. It is also true that infrastructural development comes with advantages to the enhancement of economic activities in the country. It is still emphasized that good infrastructure policies support the development of different infrastructures that in the end enhance trading activities and reduce costs. The improvement of people's well-being is dependent on the degree agriculture and trade favor their livelihoods. A landlocked country is disadvantaged to attain economic and social gains as one that is close to the ports. The access to markets by a country opens gates for economic, social, technological, and environmental related benefits. All in all Government policies and support determine the nature of agriculture and trade.

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