



Promoting Afghan Fruit Exports: The Role of Universities under the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

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Abstract

This research explores the role of universities in promoting Afghan fruit exports under the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA). Afghanistan, with its fertile soil and favorable climate, is known for its high-quality fruits, yet significant challenges hinder effective exportation. Political instability, infrastructural deficiencies, and limited marketing strategies have historically affected the agricultural sector. This study aims to evaluate the Islamic Emirate's initiatives to facilitate trade and examine the contributions of researchers and university professors in enhancing the visibility of Afghan fruits in global markets.

Using a descriptive and exploratory methodology, secondary data from the Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook and international databases were analyzed, focusing on parameters such as export composition, trends, and market destinations from 2021 to 2023. Results indicate a remarkable increase in fruit exports, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of approximately 37.8%, rising from around \$341.76 million in 2021 to \$648.38 million in 2023. Raisins and figs emerged as the leading export items, comprising significant portions of the total export composition.

The analysis further reveals the pivotal role of academic research in promoting Afghan fruits, with a notable increase in publications reflecting growing scholarly interest. This study underscores the importance of strategic investment in the agricultural sector and highlights the necessity for enhanced collaboration between academia and industry to maximize the potential of Afghan fruit exports, ultimately contributing to the country's economic development.

Keywords: Afghan Fruit Exports, Export, Islamic Emirate, University Contributions, Agricultural Development.

Introduction

Afghanistan is recognized as an agricultural country with unique climatic conditions and fertile soil, making it ideal for cultivating a variety of high-quality fruits, including pomegranates, grapes, peaches, and apples (Yaqubi & Erol Ak, 2019). According to reports

from the World Bank, 75 to 80 percent of the Afghan population is employed in agriculture and livestock (The World, 2014). The sector contributes 34.32 percent to the gross domestic product (NSIA, 2023). A significant portion of Afghanistan's exports consists of agricultural products, underscoring agriculture's critical importance in the country's economic structure.

Historically, producing dried fruits and nuts has been one of Afghanistan's most important export categories (Muradi & Boz, 2018). Experts believe that serious investment—human, financial, and technical—directed toward these resources could not only meet the needs of Afghanistan's people but also enable substantial exports, generating significant revenue for the government. The role of women in harvesting and processing these fruits further enhances their contribution to household incomes (Stankzai, 2021).

Despite the potential of Afghan dried fruits, the production and trade chain currently face numerous challenges. Political disruptions have historically harmed foreign agricultural trade and damaged infrastructure, leading to a decline in agricultural production. Analyses of foreign trade from 1980 to 2019 reveal that while agricultural exports were significantly negative in the earlier years, they improved in the later period. This instability highlights the need for effective agricultural development policies under committed leadership (Hashime *et al.*, 2020).

Several studies have emphasized governance and agricultural productivity and revealed that effective governance significantly enhances agricultural outputs. Lio and Liu (2008) demonstrate that better governance allows countries to produce more agricultural outputs given the same input levels. Their findings reinforce the idea that governance is fundamental to agricultural success, supporting the assertion that improved governance infrastructure is crucial for enhancing agricultural productivity. Ugwu and Kanu (2011) analyzed the agricultural reforms in Nigeria and highlighted that despite various government strategies aimed at achieving food self-sufficiency, challenges such as policy instability and poor coordination hindered progress. Mamba and Ali (2022) provide evidence that agricultural exports enhance agricultural growth and overall economic growth in ECOWAS countries.

The Islamic Emirate has taken steps to facilitate trade, particularly in fruits, and it is essential to examine its performance in this area. Additionally, researchers and university professors play a crucial role in promoting Afghan fruits to global markets by preparing and disseminating research and articles. Their efforts are vital for enhancing the visibility and appeal of Afghan agricultural products internationally.

Export promotion programs play a vital role in enhancing a country's agricultural competitiveness in global markets. Geldres-Weiss and Monreal-Pérez (2017) explored the impact of government-sponsored initiatives, specifically trade fairs and trade missions, on Chilean firms' export activities. Their research revealed that while trade fairs significantly boost export sales growth, trade missions are more beneficial for inexperienced exporters. This highlights the importance of tailored promotional strategies that cater to the varying needs of firms within the agricultural sector.

Understanding the performance of the Islamic Emirate in the export of fruits and the contributions of academia is crucial for leveraging Afghanistan's agricultural potential. This research aims to explore these dimensions, emphasizing the importance of effective promotion and trade policies to capitalize on Afghanistan's rich agricultural resources.

Statement of the Research Problem

Afghanistan has long been recognized for its agricultural potential, particularly in the production of high-quality fruits. However, despite this potential, the country faces significant challenges in effectively exporting these products to global markets. Political instability, infrastructural deficiencies, and limited marketing strategies have historically hindered the growth of Afghanistan's agricultural exports (Rahimi & Artukoğlu, 2021).

The Islamic Emirate's recent governance presents both opportunities and challenges for the agricultural sector. While there have been efforts to facilitate trade and enhance security for producers, the effectiveness of these measures in boosting fruit exports remains to be critically evaluated. Additionally, the role of researchers and university professors is vital in promoting Afghan fruits internationally. Their ability to disseminate knowledge, conduct market research, and establish connections with global buyers can significantly impact the success of Afghan fruit exports.

We deemed it necessary to highlight the role of the Islamic Emirate in the development of fruit trade in Afghanistan, as well as the collaboration of university professors and other researchers in introducing Afghan trade goods through this research.

Research Objectives

- 1) To examine the performance of the Islamic Emirate in the export of fruits from Afghanistan.
- 2) To investigate the role of researchers and university professors in improving the promotion of Afghan fruits to global markets.

Given these complexities, this research aims to address the following questions:

- How has the performance of the Islamic Emirate influenced the export of fruits from Afghanistan?
- What role do researchers and university professors play in promoting Afghan fruits to global markets, and how can their contributions be enhanced?

By examining these aspects, the research seeks to identify strategies for improving the export performance of Afghan fruits, thereby contributing to the economic development of the country.

Material and Method

This research is descriptive and exploratory and based on secondary data and sources. Considering the objectives, secondary data has been collected from credible sources and analyzed. To assess the performance and achievements of the Islamic Emirate government in the fruit export and import sector, relevant data has been gathered from the Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook and Trade Statistics covering the years 2021 to 2023/24 (three years of the governing of the Islamic Emirate government). Additionally, to evaluate the role of researchers and university professors in improving the promotion of Afghan fruits to international markets, research activities and published articles from reputable international databases, including Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Academia, have been collected and analyzed. Due to limitations in purchasing membership, databases such as Web of Science and Scopus were not utilized.

Parameters Under Investigation

In this study, five parameters have been established for the first objective; they are, the composition of fruit exports, export trends, the share of fruits in the total export, the top ten export destinations for fruits, and the trade balance of fruits. Similarly, for the second objective, parameters such as the number of published articles in the field of fruit export and introduction to international markets were calculated for three years of the Islamic Emirate, the number of articles published by countries, citation analysis of these articles, and a review of published articles by subject will be examined.

This section will evaluate the composition of fresh and dried fruit exports during three years of IEA from 2021 to 2023 using a pie chart. The goal of this analysis is to determine the achievements of the Emirate government in the composition of fruit exports and to see if there has been any change in the increase of export composition.

Understanding whether the government has experienced a declining or increasing trend in fresh and dried fruit exports is particularly significant. For this reason, the trends in fruit exports during both governments will be analyzed using a bar graph. Additionally, the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) will be utilized to determine the annual growth percentage of exports, as explained below:

$$CAGR = \frac{(Vf)^{\frac{1}{n}}}{Vi} - 1$$

Where:

Vf = Final value or value in the last year

Vi = Initial value or value in the first year

n = Number of years (Žlahtič, 2019)

To determine if the government performed better in terms of the share of fruits in total exports, this parameter is of particular importance. Thus, the share of fresh and dried fruit exports in total exports will be examined from 2021 to 2023 to identify if the government had better performance in this regard.

To understand the achievements of the Islamic Emirate in finding new markets for Afghan fruit exports, this parameter and its analysis are crucial to see how the Emirate has performed in identifying new markets and export destinations.

Finally, to understand the performance and achievements of the Islamic Emirate regarding self-sufficiency in the production of fresh and dried fruits, this parameter will be evaluated and analyzed. It will also be compared with the previous government's performance to ascertain the extent of the Emirate's achievements in trade balance or domestic fruit production self-sufficiency.

The Role of University Professors and Researchers in Introducing Afghan Fruits

Now we will discuss the parameters related to the second objective of the research – the role of university professors and researchers in introducing Afghan fruits to foreign countries. Published articles by researchers and university professors in international databases are a significant means of introducing Afghan fruits. To analyze this role, we will review the articles published by university professors from 2020 to 2024, categorized by year.

The number of articles published by the country reveals the role of university professors in introducing fruits to various countries globally. This important parameter will be examined and analyzed. The more frequently an article is cited the greater the

dissemination of information regarding Afghan fruits. Therefore, we will evaluate the citation rate of articles published by Afghan university professors. It is essential to assess the role of university professors in disseminating information concerning Afghan fruits based on the research topics. This parameter can be effectively represented using pie charts.

Data Analysis Method

The data obtained from this research will be analyzed using Excel software. Initially, the data will be entered into Excel, and then, after cleaning, analyses such as generating graphs, tables, and calculating percentages will be performed. The creation of bar graphs, pie charts, and tables will facilitate the comparison of the performance and achievements of the Islamic Emirate government.

Data analysis is crucial for verifying the validity of hypotheses in any research. In contemporary studies relying on collected information, data analysis is one of the most vital and fundamental components. Raw data will be analyzed using statistical software and, after processing, presented as usable information to stakeholders.

Results

In this section, the data obtained from the research are analyzed, focusing on the export and import of fruits from 1397 to 1402 across the entire country. My research is based on a library method, and the resulting sample has been analyzed using Excel.

Data analysis is crucial for verifying the accuracy of hypotheses in any research study. Today, in most studies that rely on information collected from the research subject, data analysis is considered one of the most essential components. Raw data is analyzed using statistical software, and after processing, it is presented in a usable format for stakeholders.

1- Composition of fruit export during the three initial years of IEA ruling

The composition of fruit exports from Afghanistan (Figure 1) over the years 2021 to 2023 reflects a noteworthy achievement that significantly contributes to the country's economy by enhancing foreign currency earnings. The data illustrated in the pie chart indicates that raisins and figs are the dominant export items, representing 19% and 18% of the total export composition, respectively. Other key exports include grapes, black pine nuts, pomegranates, pistachio kernels, apples, and dried apricots, among others, each contributing to the diverse portfolio of Afghanistan's fruit exports.

This composition is derived from the cumulative export values over the three years of governance by the Islamic Emirate, with raisins alone accounting for exports valued at \$30,182,037. Throughout this period, Afghanistan has generated a total of \$27,468,430 from various fruit exports, culminating in an impressive overall revenue of \$1,558,222,333 from the trade of fruits. This growth not only underscores the importance of diversifying exports but also highlights the potential for sustainable economic development through the agricultural sector. The data emphasizes the need for continued investment and support for the fruit industry to maximize its contributions to the national economy.

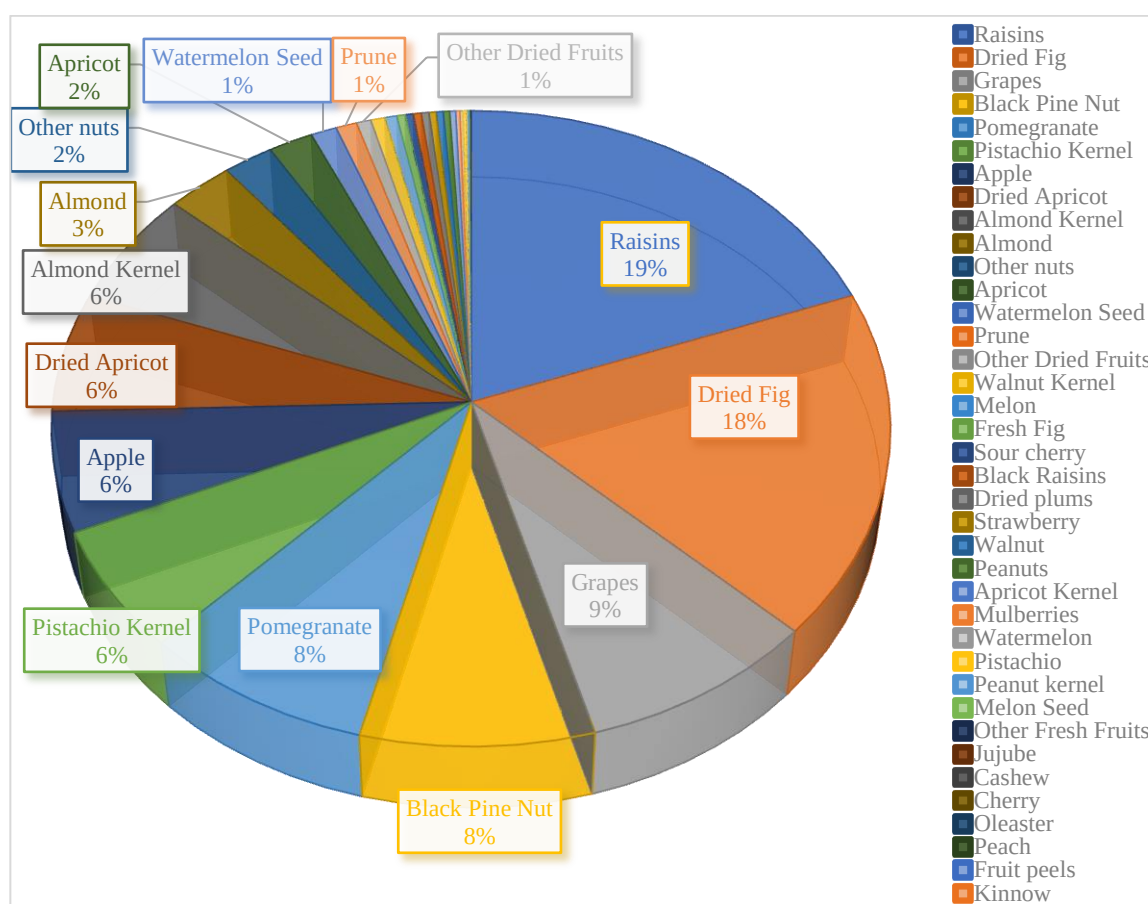


Figure 1- Composition of Exported Fruits 2022-2024

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

2- Trend in Export of fruits During Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

Trend in export of Afghanistan is illustrated in figure (2). The chart demonstrating the export values of fruits from Afghanistan reveals a significant upward trend over recent years, showcasing both historical data and future projections. From 2021-22 to 2023-24, the export values increased markedly, rising from \$341,758.7 to \$1,582,222.3. This substantial growth highlights the expanding market opportunities and improvements in agricultural practices within the region. Looking ahead, the projections for 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27 indicate continued growth, with exports anticipated to reach \$965,580, \$1,338,543, and \$1,711,506, respectively. Such predictions suggest a robust growth trajectory, reflecting confidence in the sector's potential. The calculated CAGR further underscores the strong performance of the fruit export sector.

From 2021 to 2023, the export value of fruits from Afghanistan experienced a significant growth, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of approximately 37.8%. This indicates that, on average, the export value increased by 37.8% each year over this period. The export value rose from approximately 341.76 million dollars in 2021 to around 648.38 million dollars in 2023, reflecting a robust upward trend in the country's fruit exports.

Overall, the data presented in the chart not only illustrates the economic potential of the fruit export industry but also emphasizes the importance of continued investment in this sector. By leveraging this momentum, stakeholders can maximize the benefits of fruit exports, contributing to economic development and improving livelihoods in the region.

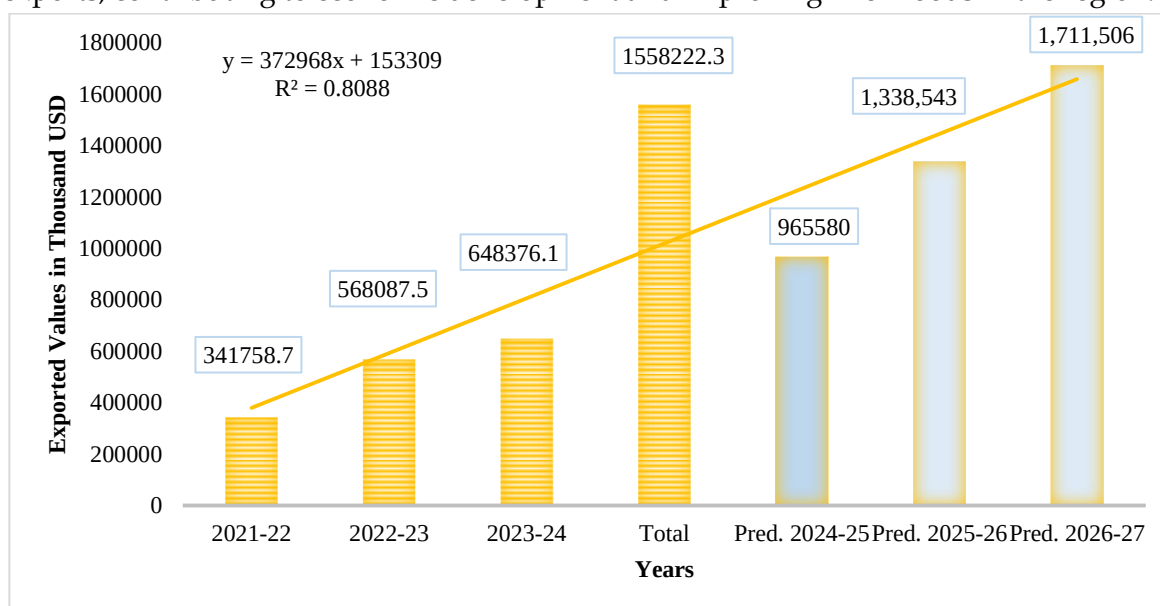


Figure 2- Trend in export of fruits from Afghanistan and future prediction

Note: CAGR = 37.8 %

Source: Calculation of authors using extracted data from NSIA

3- Contribution of Fruit Exports to Total Exports

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the performance of the Islamic Emirate's government in the area of fruit exports, it is essential to examine the share of fruit exports in relation to total exports. Figure (3) presents the total export value of Afghanistan, the value of fruit exports, and the percentage contribution of fruits to total exports.

In the year 2021/22, the total export value was \$332.01 thousand, with fruit exports accounting for 39.06% of this total. However, in 2022/23, despite an increase in the value of fruit exports, its share declined to 30.81%. This trend reversed in 2023/24, as the contribution of fruit exports rose again to 36.3%.

This analysis highlights the fluctuating role of fruit exports within Afghanistan's overall export landscape. The initial increase followed by a decline may indicate challenges faced in the fruit sector during that period, while the subsequent recovery suggests improvements in production, quality, or market access for Afghan fruit. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders to enhance the fruit export sector's contribution to the national economy, ensuring sustainable growth and development in the years to come.

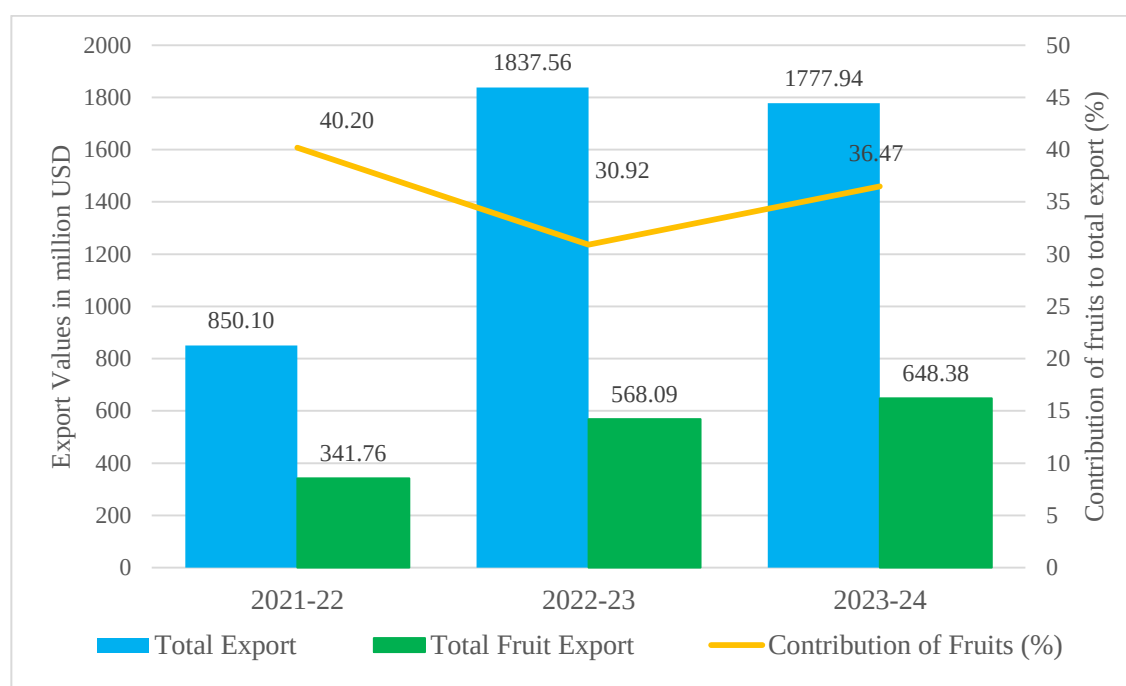


Figure 3 – Contribution of exported fruits to total export of Afghanistan during from 2021-2023

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

4- Destinations of Afghanistan's Fresh Fruit During the Islamic Emirate

The chart in figure (4) illustrates the destinations of fresh fruit exports from Afghanistan during the Islamic Emirate. It shows that Pakistan imported fresh fruits valued at \$17,028,831, which constitutes an overwhelming 98.02% of total fruit exports. This underscores Pakistan's position as the primary market for Afghan fresh fruits.

In addition to Pakistan, Tajikistan, India, and Iran are the next largest importers, with respective shares of 2.04%, 4.20%, and 1.42%. This distribution highlights the dominant role of Pakistan in Afghanistan's fruit export sector while also revealing the importance of neighboring countries as secondary markets.

Understanding these export dynamics is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders, as strengthening ties with these markets and exploring additional opportunities could enhance Afghanistan's fruit export potential and contribute to economic growth.

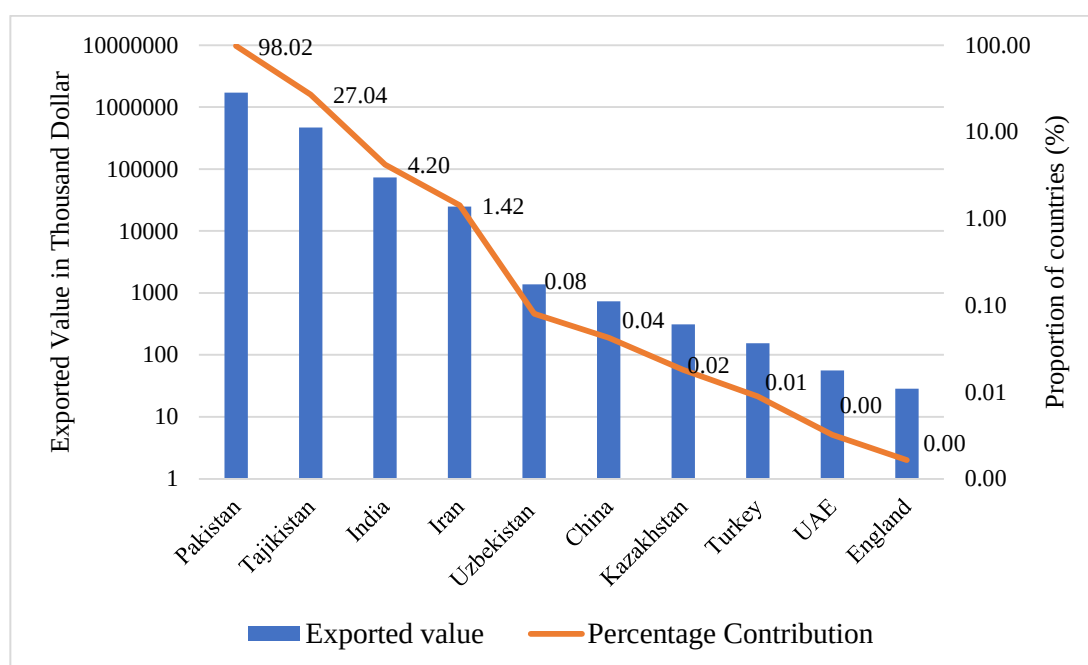


Figure 4- Top Ten Destinations of Afghanistan's Fresh Fruits

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

The analysis of the export destinations for Afghanistan's dried fruits reveals significant market dynamics during the Islamic Emirate's governance. As illustrated in figure (5), India stands out as the largest importer, with a total import value of \$205,437,604, accounting for an impressive 52% of total dried fruit exports.

Following India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, China, and the United Arab Emirates occupy the subsequent positions with export shares of 17.91%, 6.79%, 5.37%, and 3.91%, respectively. This distribution highlights the critical role that India plays in Afghanistan's dried fruit export market, while also indicating that neighboring countries like Pakistan and Uzbekistan are vital secondary markets.

The data underscores the importance of strengthening trade relationships with these key destinations, as well as exploring potential growth opportunities in other markets. By leveraging these insights, stakeholders can develop strategies to enhance Afghanistan's dried fruit export sector, contributing to broader economic growth in the region.

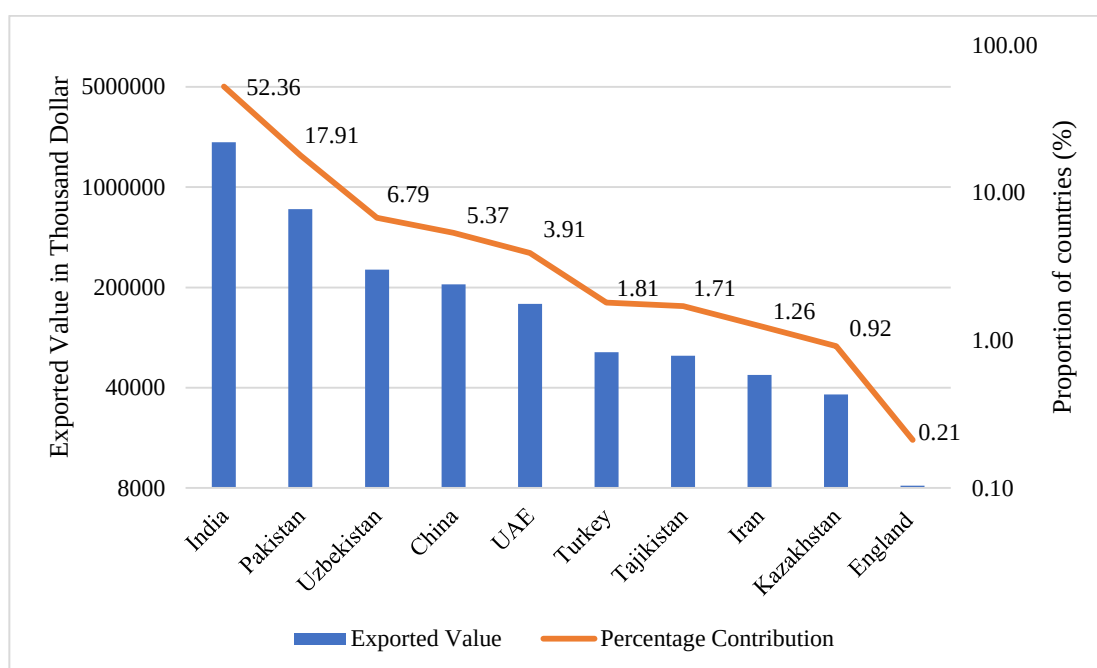


Figure 5- Top ten export destinations for Afghanistan's dried fruits

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

5- Trade Balance of Fruits in Afghanistan

The trade balance of fruits provides a comprehensive view of self-sufficiency in the fruit sector and illustrates Afghanistan's revenue from this industry. As depicted in figure (6), the trade balance has shown a consistent upward trend over the past three years, indicating significant growth.

Overall, during the three-year period of the Islamic Emirate, Afghanistan has generated a net revenue of \$93,451,999 from fruit trade. The chart highlights the increasing gap between exports and imports, with exports rising significantly, reinforcing the potential for Afghanistan to enhance its self-reliance in the fruit sector.

This positive trajectory suggests opportunities for further growth and development in Afghanistan's fruit industry, emphasizing the need for strategic initiatives to boost production and expand market access.

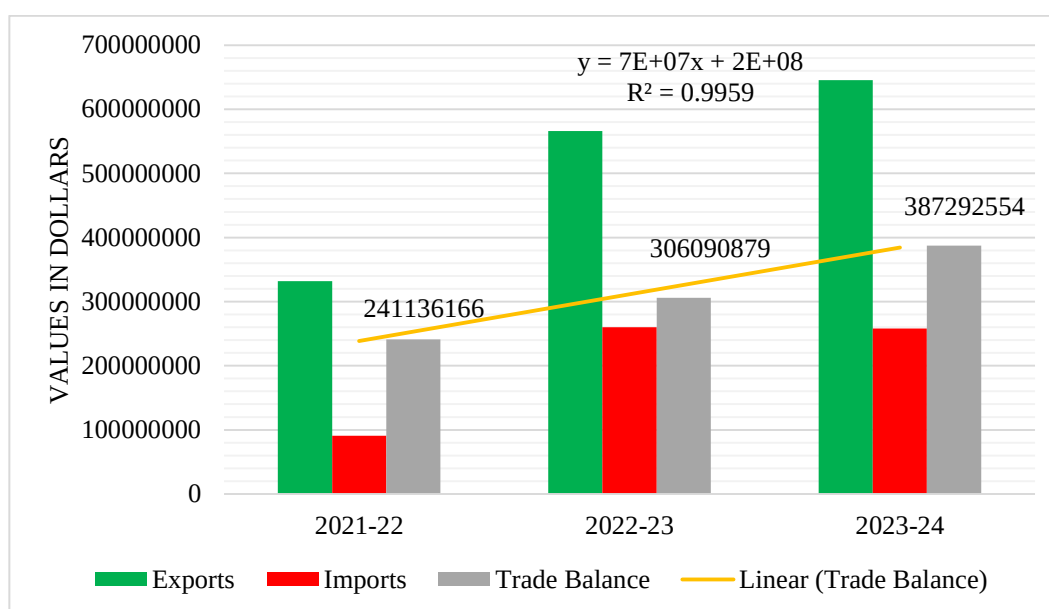


Figure 6- Trade balance of fruits in Afghanistan

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

Analysis of Imported Fruits in Afghanistan

To illustrate the contribution of various imported fruits to the total import value, a Pareto Chart (Figure 7) has been utilized. As shown, pistachios alone account for a significant value of \$16,414,540, representing 26% of the total value of fresh and dried fruit imports.

In addition, fruits such as bananas, mandarins, dates, oranges, apples, and grapefruit collectively make up over 80% of the total value of fresh and dried fruit imports. This concentration highlights the dominance of a few key fruit types in Afghanistan's import landscape, emphasizing the potential for targeted strategies to enhance domestic production and reduce reliance on imports.

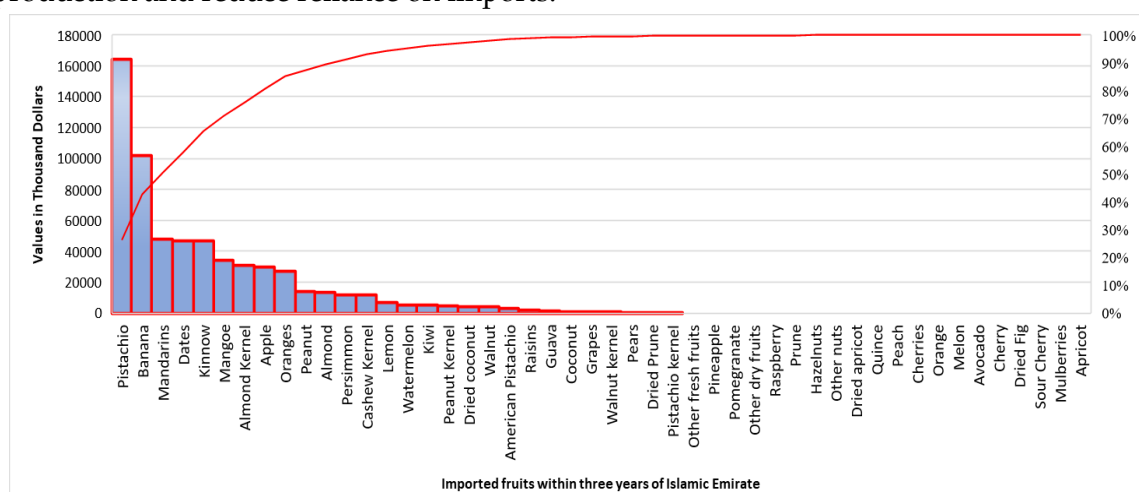


Figure 7- Pareto principle of imported fruits in Afghanistan

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

Contributions of researchers and university professors in enhancing the promotion of Afghan fruit in international markets

This section highlights the findings from the analysis of publications in enhancing the promotion of Afghanistan fruits in international markets.

1- Distribution of publications by topic

Figure (8) illustrates the distribution of publications across different topics, revealing key areas of focus within the academic discourse. The subject with the most publications is Export, with a total of 10, indicating a strong emphasis on the promotion and international marketing strategies for Afghan fruits. Following closely is Pomegranate, with 8 publications, reflecting its significance as a major fruit in Afghanistan's agricultural landscape. The Almond and Pine Nut subjects each garnered 7 and 6 publications, respectively, underscoring their importance in both local and international markets. Other notable subjects include Dried Fruits (5), Apricots (5), and walnuts (4), which further highlight the diverse range of products being explored. Topics such as Trade, Fresh Fruits, and Fruit and Nut Management received fewer publications, indicating potential areas for further research. Overall, the findings suggest a concentrated effort in research focused on export strategies and specific fruit types, which are crucial for enhancing the marketability of Afghan agricultural products. This analysis can inform future research directions and collaborative efforts aimed at strengthening the visibility of Afghan fruits in global markets.

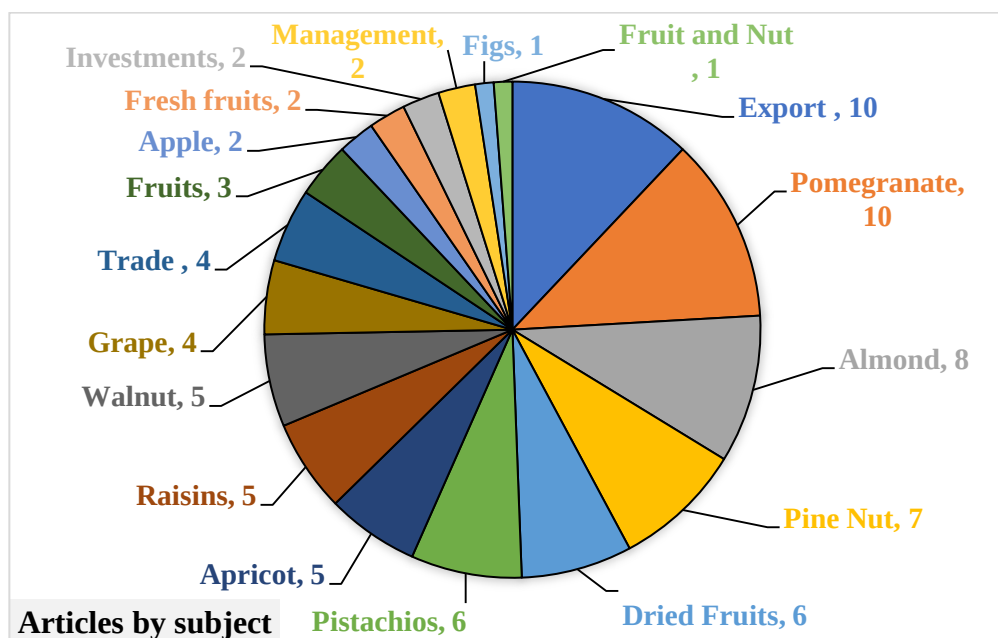


Figure 8- Distribution of publications by topic

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

2- Year-wise publication trends on fruits of Afghanistan

Next, figure (9) analyzes the publication trends of researchers and university professors in the field of promoting Afghan fruits over five years, from 2020 to 2024. The data presented

in the chart highlights the annual number of publications, reflecting the growing interest and scholarly activity in this area. Overall, there is a noticeable upward trend in the number of publications from 2020 to 2023, indicating increasing engagement by scholars. In 2020, the year began with a modest number of publications, serving as a foundational year for research in this field. In 2021, an increase in publications was observed, suggesting a burgeoning interest among researchers. By 2022, the number of publications continued to rise, indicating sustained research efforts and an expanding academic discourse surrounding the promotion of Afghan fruits. A significant spike is evident in 2023, with over 25 publications recorded, reflecting heightened awareness of Afghan fruits in international markets or increased research funding and collaboration efforts. Although projections for 2024 are preliminary, current trends suggest that publication activity may stabilize or continue to grow, depending on ongoing research initiatives and market developments. Overall, the increasing number of publications suggests that researchers and university professors are actively contributing to the knowledge base regarding Afghan fruits and their promotion, which is crucial for enhancing the visibility of these agricultural products in international markets. This trend not only underscores the relevance of academic inquiry in promoting these products but also highlights the potential for further collaboration between researchers and industry stakeholders. Continued monitoring of publication trends will be essential to understanding the evolving landscape of Afghan fruit promotion and its impact on international markets, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the role of academic research in enhancing the visibility and marketability of Afghan fruits globally.

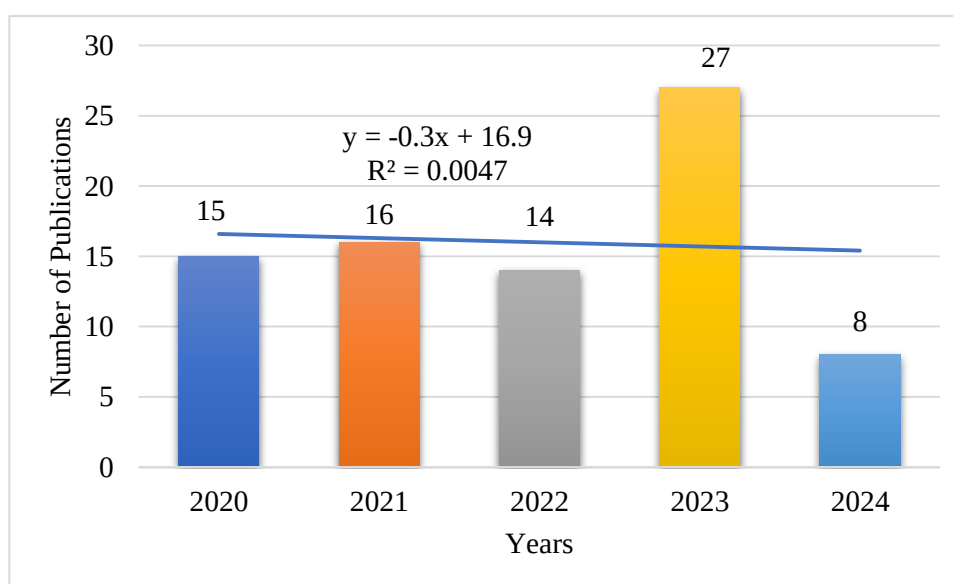


Figure 9 – Year-wise publication trends on fruits of Afghanistan

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

3- Distribution of research publications across various countries

Additionally, figure (10) highlights the findings from the analysis of research publications conducted across various countries focusing on Afghan fruits and nuts. The graph indicates a significant concentration of research activities in Afghanistan, which leads with nearly 50 publications, reflecting a strong domestic emphasis on studying and promoting local agricultural products. Following Afghanistan is India, with a smaller yet notable number of publications, suggesting collaborative or comparative research efforts in the region. Pakistan also shows some engagement in the research, though the number of publications is considerably lower than that of Afghanistan and India. Other countries, including Turkey, Iran, Uzbekistan, and Russia, contributed a minimal number of publications, indicating less focus or fewer research initiatives in these nations regarding Afghan fruits and nuts. Malaysia, Germany, England, and Bangladesh are represented with only a few publications each, underscoring the limited scope of research collaboration or interest in these countries. Overall, the findings emphasize Afghanistan's central role in the research landscape for Afghan fruits, while also highlighting the potential for increased international collaboration to enhance the understanding and promotion of these agricultural products globally. This analysis can guide future research partnerships and initiatives aimed at expanding the impact of Afghan fruit studies beyond regional borders.

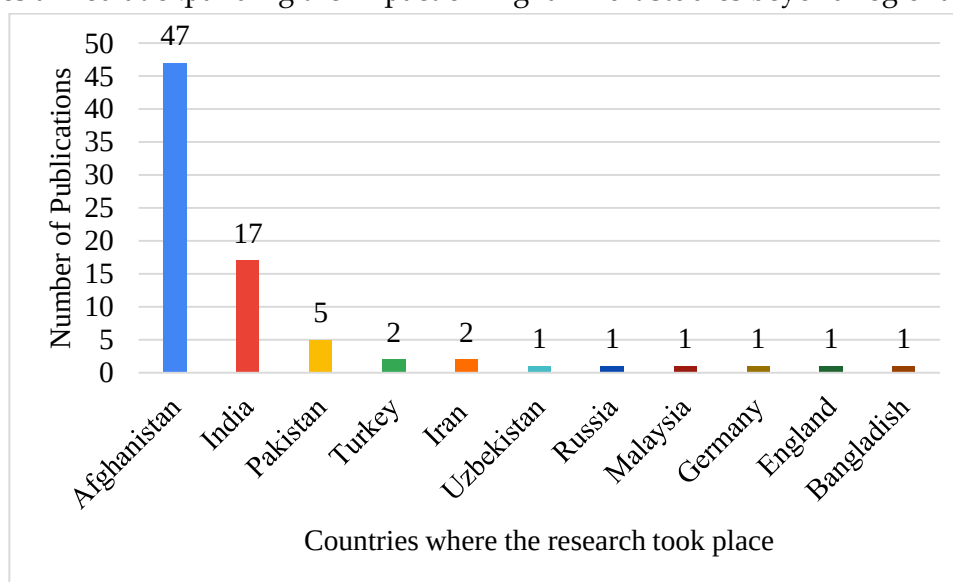


Figure 10- Distribution of research publications across various countries

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

4- Publications along with citations collected from various databases

On the other hand, figure (11) summarizes the findings from an analysis of research articles collected from two prominent databases: Google Scholar and ResearchGate. The figure illustrates the number of articles and citations associated with each database, highlighting the differences in their contributions to the scholarly discourse on Afghan fruits and nuts.

In Google Scholar, a total of 60 articles were identified, reflecting a substantial collection of research focused on this subject. These articles have garnered 66 citations, indicating a healthy level of academic engagement and acknowledgment within the scholarly community. In contrast, ResearchGate features only 20 articles, suggesting a smaller repository of research on Afghan fruits and nuts within this particular platform. The citations associated with these articles also stand at 20, reflecting a lower impact or visibility compared to those available on Google Scholar.

When combined, the total number of articles from both databases reaches 80, with a total of 86 citations. This highlights that, overall, the articles have received a considerable number of citations relative to their quantity. The analysis reveals that Google Scholar serves as the primary repository for research in this area, significantly outpacing ResearchGate in both articles and citations. This disparity emphasizes the importance of Google Scholar as a resource for accessing scholarly work related to Afghan fruits and nuts.

Overall, while the body of research is relatively modest, it has achieved a noteworthy level of citation, indicating that the work being done in this field is recognized and referenced by other scholars. These findings can inform future research endeavors and highlight the need for broader dissemination and collaboration to enhance the visibility and impact of Afghan agricultural research across different platforms.

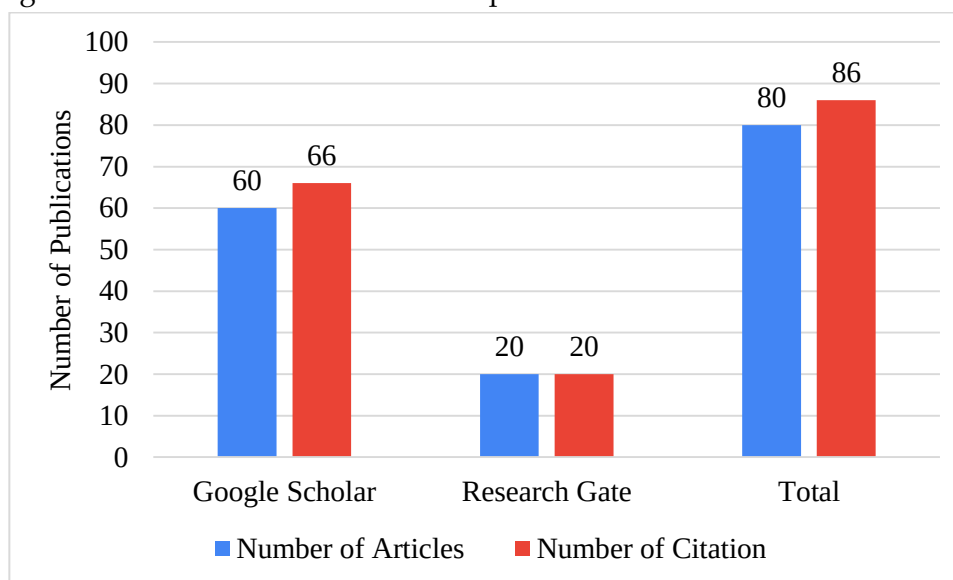


Figure 11- Publications along with citations collected from various databases

Source: Author's calculation using extracted data from NSIA

Discussion

The analysis of research publications related to Afghan fruits and nuts reveals several significant trends and insights through the examination of various charts and figures. Firstly, the distribution of publications across specific topics indicates a concentrated

academic interest in export strategies and key fruit types, particularly pomegranates and almonds. The prominence of export-related research suggests a recognition of the importance of international markets for Afghan agricultural products, highlighting opportunities for enhancing trade and economic development within the region.

Furthermore, the geographic focus of research, predominantly centered in Afghanistan, underlines the domestic commitment to studying and promoting local agricultural resources. The presence of publications from neighboring countries, such as India and Pakistan, indicates potential collaborative avenues for research that could further enrich the understanding of regional agricultural practices and market dynamics.

The comparative analysis of articles sourced from Google Scholar and ResearchGate reveals a stark contrast in the volume and citation impact of research within these platforms. Google Scholar stands out as a significant repository for articles, accounting for the majority of publications and citations. This suggests that researchers favor Google Scholar for disseminating their work, which may enhance visibility and accessibility. In contrast, the limited number of articles on ResearchGate points to a potential gap in the engagement of scholars in this area, which may hinder the broader dissemination of findings.

The total citation count across both databases illustrates that the body of research, although modest in size, has achieved a commendable level of recognition within the academic community. This underscores the relevance and significance of the work being conducted on Afghan fruits and nuts, suggesting that these studies are valuable and worthy of further exploration. The insights from Geldres-Weiss and Monreal-Pérez (2017) are particularly relevant for Afghan researchers and university professors aiming to improve the promotion of Afghan fruits in global markets. By organizing trade fairs and providing targeted support for exporters, academic stakeholders can facilitate greater visibility and market access for Afghan fruits. Additionally, understanding the differing needs of experienced and inexperienced exporters can help in designing effective training and resources, ultimately enhancing the competitiveness of Afghan fruits on the international stage.

The findings of this study on the performance of IEA reveal that effective governance significantly enhances agricultural exports, a conclusion that aligns with the broader literature on agricultural performance. For instance, Lio and Liu (2008) demonstrate that better governance allows countries to produce more agricultural outputs given the same input levels, reinforcing the idea that governance is fundamental to agricultural success. In examining Nigeria's agricultural reforms, Ugwu and Kanu (2011) note that despite various government strategies aimed at achieving food self-sufficiency, challenges such as policy instability hindered progress. This resonates with the findings of Lio and Liu, suggesting that without strong governance, even well-intentioned reforms can falter.

Similarly, the empirical analysis by Omotor *et al.* (2009) on policy reforms and agricultural exports in Nigeria underscores the importance of domestic consumption and economic

liberalization. Their study indicates that governance-related factors influence agricultural exports significantly, echoing the assertion that governance frameworks are essential for agricultural productivity improvements. In contrast, the research by Mamba and Ali (2022) highlights those agricultural exports can enhance agricultural growth and overall economic growth. This finding suggests a more direct relationship between export activities and agricultural performance, indicating that while governance is crucial, the export-driven approach can also benefit agricultural development.

Furthermore, the studies examining the impact of export promotion programs (Wang *et al.*, 2017; Geldres-Weiss & Monreal-Pérez, 2017) reveal that government initiatives can enhance export performance. These findings align with the conclusion that effective governance can amplify the benefits of such programs, as better governance not only facilitates the implementation of these programs but also encourages investment in agricultural infrastructure.

In conclusion, the findings from the analysis not only highlight the current landscape of research on Afghan fruits and nuts but also point to areas for future inquiry and collaboration. There is a clear opportunity for researchers to expand their efforts on less explored topics and to engage with international partners to enhance the global visibility of Afghan agricultural research. Such initiatives could contribute to more robust strategies for promoting Afghan fruits in international markets, ultimately benefiting the local economy and agricultural sector.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study highlights the significant potential of Afghan fruit exports under the Islamic Emirate, driven by favorable climatic conditions and fertile soil. However, realizing this potential requires a strategic approach that addresses the existing challenges in the agricultural sector. The contributions of university researchers play a pivotal role in this regard, providing essential insights and fostering a collaborative environment for promoting Afghan fruits globally. The fluctuations in export values and the share of fruits in total exports point to the need for continuous investment and policy support aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity and market access. By leveraging academic research and fostering partnerships between universities and the industry, Afghanistan can better position its fruit exports in international markets, ultimately contributing to economic development.

Suggestions

Enhance Collaboration Between Academia and Industry: Establish formal partnerships between universities and the agricultural industry to facilitate knowledge transfer and practical training for students. This collaboration can lead to innovative marketing strategies and improved agricultural practices.

To effectively promote and enhance the competitiveness of Afghan fruits in the global market, it is essential to align the academic pursuits of Afghan students studying overseas with the specific needs of the fruit export industry.

Diversify Export Markets: Develop strategies to explore and penetrate new international

markets for Afghan fruits. This could involve targeted marketing campaigns and participation in international trade fairs to showcase Afghan products.

Invest in Infrastructure Development: Advocate for investments in infrastructure, such as transportation and storage facilities, to enhance the efficiency of the supply chain. Improved infrastructure is crucial for reducing post-harvest losses and ensuring timely deliveries to international markets.

Support Research and Development: Encourage further research on the cultivation, processing, and marketing of Afghan fruits. Funding for research initiatives can lead to the discovery of new export opportunities and the development of value-added products.

Afghan students abroad can

Implement Effective Marketing Strategies: Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy that highlights the unique qualities of Afghan fruits, focusing on quality, organic farming practices, and the cultural significance of these products.

Strengthen Policy Frameworks: Advocate for supportive agricultural policies that provide incentives for farmers and exporters. This can create a conducive environment for growth and sustainability in the fruit export sector.

Acknowledgment

The authors also thank the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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