



AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN INDIA: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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ABSTRACT

"I Believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds."

E.M.Tiffany

Agriculture in India is not only a source of earning for its million of population but it is a way of life for millions of masses. Being the largest private sector 'agriculture' enjoys a very important position in Indian economy It is a sector linked with various sector like production, processing and marketing; agriculture continuously dominate to change in India. The paper aims to study the causes for low agricultural productivity in India by using the secondary data. Agriculture is the main occupation in India as large population is living in the rural areas and having agriculture as their livelihood. A change in the agricultural productivity is always a cause of concern for agricultural sector. Agriculture holds a special place in the heart of Indian farmers not only because it is the source of their bread and butter but it is the lifeline of Indian farmers.

KEYWORDS: - Rural, Agriculture, Crop Production, Productivity, Infrastructure, Land, Yields

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural productivity relates to land productivity, i.e., yield per hectare. It is expressed in physical production rather than on value concept. Generally the quantity of the produce is taken into account and not its value. Agricultural productivity though low is slowly and steadily rising during 1950-51 and 2010-11 for most of the crops. During the first decade of the millennium the rate of growth of agricultural output was lower than the planned output. The Planning Commission fixed a largest growth rate of 4% per annum for 11th plan. The largest 4% growth in GDP from agriculture and allied sectors was felt necessary to achieve overall GDP growth target of 9% per annum. The annual rate of growth of crop output during 2000-01 to 2004-05 was only 1% and during 2004-05 to 2009-10 it was 1.7%. These growth rates were close to overall population growth rate during the decade.

The share of agriculture and allied activities in gross domestic product at factor cost fell from 55.1 percent in 1950-51 to 14.6 percent in 2009-10. This declining share of agriculture sector is a cause of Indian economy as majority of its population are engaged in this sector. It is an admitted fact that agricultural

productivity in India continues to be considerably lower than in other Countries. The causes for low productivity of agriculture sector in India can be viewed in two ways, i.e., General causes, Institutional factors and Technological factors.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the extent of productivity in the agricultural sector in India.
- To evaluate the causes for low agricultural productivity in India.
- To analyze that how and to what extent productivity of agriculture is affecting the role agriculture sector in India.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- Agricultural Productivity in India is low due its high dependency of vagaries of nature.
- An uncertainty in the utilization of resources is always a challenge for Agriculture productivity in India.



LOW AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

The rapid increase in population and slow shift of labour from agriculture to non-agriculture is evident in the dominance of marginal farms in India. In 2002-03 nearly 70 percent of the operational holdings were marginal holdings with size less than one hectare; another 16 percent were small holdings with size between 1-2 hectares. The small sizes prevent farmers from adopting improved agricultural technologies and create barriers for accessing credit and adopting improved agricultural practices.

General Causes

India is facing serious environmental stress in her natural resource stocks. Land desertification and land degradation affect the quality of land, which is the major capital input in farming.

- Overcrowding in agriculture- Indian agriculture is an overcrowded by the people. This has led to decline in the per capita land area, sub-division and fragmentation of land holdings, disguised unemployment and negative marginal productivity. Even the sub-marginal lands of inferior quality are being brought under cultivation on account of the severe pressure of population on land. This land being inferior always resulted in less yields.
- Water Resources- The challenges of water resources management faced by India and the likelihood has been intensified due to rising population. The available water resources were falling short with regard to expected agricultural and industrial demand, the danger of pollution of water bodies and, over the longer term, the effect of climate stress on water availability in many parts of the country are the major causes of low agricultural productivity. During 1995-96 to 2006-07, on an average, the contributions of surface and groundwater to net irrigated area were 32 percent and 60 percent respectively. There has been a fall in ground water table due to rapid expansion of tube wells. There is deterioration in water quality which has affected agricultural productivity adversely.
- Fertilizers- The assessment of the 11th plan notes that the association between fertilizer consumption and food grains production has weakened during the recent years due to imbalanced use of nutrients and deficiency of micro-nutrient deficiencies in Indian soils, which demands a careful examination and policy action in this matter. The imbalance in

use of plant of nutrients and neglect of micro nutrient deficiencies in Indian soils has led to declining fertilizer response resulted in low agricultural productivity.

- Soil- A healthy soil is necessary to ensure proper retention and release of water and nutrients, promote root growth maintain soil biotic habitat and resist degradation. Decline in soil health causes low fertilizer and other nutrients responses resulting in low productivity. There is an urgent need for soil testing at farm level for determining an optimum use of fertilizers and following of sound crop management practices.
- Unfavourable rural Environment- Environment in villages is unfavourable and uncondusive to the development of agriculture. Farmers are ignorant and uneducated. They are influenced and guided by the customs and social institutions like caste and joint family system. This type of atmosphere has been discouraging our farmers to make any improvement on their lands.
- Finance, Storage and marketing facilities- Agricultural productivity in India has suffered in the initial stages due to the non-availability of finance, storage and marketing facilities. These kind of inadequate resources affects the agricultural productivity and the interest of farmers at large.
- Weaknesses in Policy Perception- The Indian strategy for agricultural growth remained preoccupied. The lacking of constructive policy measures had affected the productivity of agriculture negatively.

Institutional Factors

- Uneconomical size of holdings- Indian agriculture is dominated by small farmers. Every farmer owns a land. More than 70 percent of the total land holding are small in size. They are scattered too. The applications of modern science and technology to agriculture become a difficult task. The small size of holdings has contributed to the low productivity of agriculture.
- Faulty Land Tenure system- Due to defective land system there are two classes namely- the class of landlords and the tenants. The class of landlords always exploited the tenants. Under this tenancy system land belong not to the tiller but to the landlord. The tenant has no security and cannot invest on his own terms. Under these difficult conditions, it is impossible to expect the tiller to increase



agricultural productivity. Though many tenancy law reforms has been done in India but positive result is negligible.

Technological factors

- Poor Techniques of production- Primitive and poor techniques of production, inadequate and obsolete nature of implements and failure to apply modern science and technology to our agriculture have been the contributory factors for the low productivity of agriculture in India.
- Lack of Research- Low level of research is also one of the factor responsible for the low productivity of agriculture in India. The rural farmers far away from the newly developed techniques in order to raise agricultural productivity.
- Rural Indebtedness- Rural indebtedness is another contributory factor to the low productivity of agriculture in India. It is well established fact about farmer that he take birth in debt, lives in debt and die indebt.

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CONCLUSION

India's agriculture has the potential to feed not only its 125 corers of masses but to feed the many more. Though the causes for low agricultural productivity are many fold a constructive policy initiative and farmer friendly approach to it can definitely bring positive change in this direction. We need policies for increasing crop productivity, crop diversification, generation of non-farm opportunities in rural areas and development of agro based industries. Implementation of nutrition based subsidy scheme, fertilizer prices linked with minimum support price, easy availability of institutional credit facility, targeting agricultural subsidies and concessional agricultural credit only to small and marginal farmers are some of the steps which can contribute in sustainable agricultural development in India.

"It's not about how bad you want it.....

. It's about how hard you are willing to work for it."

One can't just sit in the house and wish you had the perfect field or the perfect yield, one has to go out into the field and work with it productively.

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