



BOOK REVIEW

Agricultural Growth In India by Subrata Kumar Ray. 2010. Serials Publications, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi.pp.320, price Rs.1150.

Indian agriculture has witnessed remarkable changes in the post independence decades. The most striking aspect of the transformation has been in the production of foodgrains where we have converted a deficit prone country with concern of widespread starvation to a situation of plenty.

The book under review is a comprehensive work on the impact of credit, in particular institutional credit, on the change in cropping pattern influencing agricultural growth in India. An attempt has been made in this book to study the nature and pattern of agricultural growth and the relative role of cropping pattern in agricultural growth, the nature of change in cropping pattern, the trend, direction/composition of institutional credit, the impact of credit, particularly institutional credit. It has also focussed on the factors influencing change in cropping pattern, the impact of several factors including credit on the change in cropping pattern and also on agricultural growth, the economics of change in cropping pattern in relation to credit availability.

Of the several issues involved in this context the author has concentrated on two important issues, viz, flow of institutional credit, especially bank credit to the agricultural sector and change in the cropping pattern during the decade of 1980s and early 1990s. The role of the former in influencing the latter is the main theme of the book under review, keeping in view that all important matter is overall growth of agricultural output and that change should always be for the better.

The author has used secondary data at the all India level, the state level (for twelve sample states) and at the district level (for fifteen districts of West Bengal) for detailed analysis with statistical tools and econometric models. The author has also collected some household data from some villages in the district of Midnapur, West Bengal to examine the impact of change in cropping pattern on the profitability of the sample households.

The book contains twelve chapters. The first chapter focuses on the importance of Agriculture in India's Economic Development and international trade. It has also included the factors (natural, technological, economic and institutional) influencing change in cropping pattern in India. This chapter also shows the research problem, scope and objectives of the study. The author has developed a good hypothesis for his study.

The second chapter makes a survey of literature in the study area. The author has made an attempt to make a review of the existing literature on changes in cropping pattern and institutional credit. The literature has been classified into the ten major headings. At the end of the chapter the author observes that from an in-depth and extensive study of the existing literature it is clear that no study has yet been undertake

to examine the impact of institutional credit on cropping pattern/agricultural growth in India and its states.

The third chapter discusses the sample design, data collection and methodology. The data have been collected through primary and secondary sources. A good sampling method has been used to gather data from primary sources.

The nature and pattern of agricultural growth in India, sample states, districts of West Bengal and blocks of Midnapur has been highlighted in the fourth chapter. Whereas chapter fifth examines the relative importance of cropping pattern and agricultural growth in the sample states of India and the districts of West Bengal. Various tables and charts have supported the chapter fourth and fifth respectively.

The next two chapters have shown the nature of change in cropping pattern in the sample states as well as in India. Chapter eight highlights nature, trend and structure of the agricultural credit in the sample states of India, districts of West Bengal and blocks of Midnapur. Apart from the rigorous statistical examination of the nature and pattern of agricultural growth and the relative role of different components including cropping pattern that influence agricultural growth, the nature of change in cropping pattern, trend, direction of credit and growth of different factors influencing change in cropping pattern, the book covers some new issues like statistical examination and economics of change in cropping pattern in relation to credit.

The presentation on the whole of the book is attractive and the publisher has also taken interest to publish it in a good form by using good papers and a colorful cover page. It is hoped that the book will prove very useful to the researchers and students of economics, commerce, management, agriculture etc. government executives concerned with the formulation and execution of policies for agricultural/rural development and the common readers interested in agricultural economics/rural development.

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