



Indian Agricultural Sector- Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract:

India has the tenth largest area of arable land in the world. According to the 2011 agricultural census, 61.5 percent of the country's total population lives in rural India. The agricultural sector, now under the purview of the World Trade Organization (WTO), supports nearly 75% of the Indian rural population and contributes approximately 34.1% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). India ranks first in milk production and second in rice production. It is a major producer of wheat and has the largest cattle and livestock population in the world. However, several difficulties are observed in the development of the Indian agricultural sector. These difficulties represent the challenges facing the agricultural sector. Therefore, this research paper examines these challenges.

Keywords: *Indian Agricultural Sector, Opportunities and Challenges.*

Introduction:

Indian agriculture sector has always been playing an important role in the economy of the country. India has the 10th largest arable land resource in the world. According to the 2011 Agricultural Census, 61.5 percent of the total population of the country resides in rural India and is dependent on agriculture. Indian agriculture has come a long way since the inception of planning in 1951. The agricultural sector is very important in terms of national income, employment, food supply, international trade, and supplying raw materials to industries. Today, India is a major supplier of several agriculture commodities like tea, coffee, rice, spices, oil meals, fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, meat and its preparations and marine products to the international market.

In terms of quality of production, India is the top producer in the world in milk and second largest in wheat and rice. The agricultural sector offers various opportunities, and by taking

advantage of these opportunities, the nation's overall development can be achieved. However, there are many challenges in the development of agriculture. These challenges include dependence on the monsoon, limited technology, low investment, insufficient agricultural reforms, and indebtedness. In such a situation, it is essential to achieve development for agriculture, farmers, and the entire country through proper coordination. Therefore, this research paper examines the opportunities and challenges in the agricultural sector.

Research Methodology:

In this research paper, secondary data has been used. Magazines, journals, annual reports, statements and periodicals were consulted to fetch the information. The information is also collected through various websites and e-links.

Objectives of the Research Study:

The present research study was carried out with following objectives in view:

1. To study Opportunities before Indian Agriculture sector.
2. To study the Challenges before Indian Agriculture Sector.

Opportunities for the Agricultural Sector:

Different opportunities in the agricultural sectors to improve business values and generate clear records to take innovative practices.

Rural Reforms:

All this call for a range of rural reforms at various level. Our Krishi Vigyan Kendras and extension service system is in dire need of restructuring and betterment. We do not see here any new, big ideas on now we can extend the benefit of modern Science and technology in and effective manner to our farmers. All over the country we find bureaucratic hurdles have put a stop to revitalizing our extension services. We hope our scientists and the technologists and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture will look in to how we can find new pathways to revitalize expansion services.

Technology Management:

We do need a lot more attention to be paid to the management of our agriculture research and technology system. We must also ponder why Bihar which was chosen to be the original location of the Indian institute of Agriculture Research, has failed to catch up with rest of the country? We also do believe there is a need for increased application of science and modern technology to forest conservation and management environment protection, management of our animal husbandry resources, Water conservation and utilization of herbs and plants, we need harmonious blend of advance science and technology, appropriate and local

knowledge to ensure and equitable distribution of the benefits of new knowledge.

More Credit:

We have to think fresh in way we extend credit to our farmers and we say so far more than one reason. As our agriculture becomes commercialized, there will be more reliance commercialized inputs. Farmers will need, there for more credit. If you are operating a system in which more and more innovation also are the product of the functioning of not the public sector system but of private enterprise and that's the reality. The first generation of agriculture research was by product of functioning of public se sector system. In our own country as well as abroad. Now for greater reason, the science and technology is also being increasingly privatised. What the implications of transforming our agriculture in this new era of increasingly in this new era of encouragingly privatized Science and technology. This is also an issue over which we must ponder. If we don't pay adequate attention to this aspect of sustaining our agriculture growth in this new era, public private partnership is nothing more than buzzword. We have to convert in to a viable development strategy and I seek your talent, guidance as to how to crop with this buzzword.

Vision:

Our vision of rural India is of modern agrarian and industrial and services economy, co-existing side by side, where people can live in well-equipped villages and commute easily to work be it on the farm are in the non-farm economy. There is much that modern science and technology can do realize this vision. We do believe that knowledge can contribute a great deal to this gigantic national effort. Our scientists, therefore have an exceedingly important role to play in this realm.

Many of us have been pre occupied with the problem of agriculture production and

productivity having hit a growth plateau. Dr Swami Nathan has repeatedly alerted us to the need to give a new boost to agriculture research. We do recognise the need to increase the efficiency of utilisation of inputs, the need to improve for management practices, the need to reduce post-harvest losses through better post-harvest management technologies in storage, transportation and processing. This can increase both yields and contribute to higher income for the farmer through better value addition.

Much Need to be Done:

We admit that much still needs to be done to improve the prospect. For farmers easily in rain fed areas and dry land agriculture. We will need to work towards insuring more remunerative price for our farmer. We are aware of the acute distress of our farmers who bear the burden of heavy debt. Most importantly, we must ensure that more people get employment in manufacturing and service so that the disproportionate burden on agriculture in providing a livelihood to two thirds of our population get reduced.

These results of our efforts to improve agriculture are clearly visible in some places. Farmers are getting better prices for many crops. This helps hurt the common man when the price of essential food. Commodities go up we need to understand that if we want better prices for farmers so that they earn a better livelihood, the prices of what they produce and sell will have to go up.

Others:

- I) To promote public investment in agriculture research, rural infrastructure and irrigation.
- II) To increase the rural credit with low interest rate.
- III) To introduce the special program for dry land farmers i.e. Water Management and land Development program

Challenges of the Agricultural Sector:

With the key opportunities, different challenges are faced by the agriculture sector because this sector is mostly affected by the entire decisions and collaboration to get the clear plans. Major challenges faced by the agricultural sector in India relate to the following aspects:

No Proper Management of Irrigation:

Irrigation in India can be broadly classified into two parts, each having different issues. There are a few major problems with surface irrigation. Irrigation facilities are inadequate and there is no effective system management for how much water is stored, how much is used for irrigation or what value can be added to this water. Consequently, farmers depend on rainfall, specifically the monsoon season. A good monsoon results in robust growth for the economy as a whole, while a poor monsoon leads to sluggish growth. With groundwater, the major problem is of equity.

Bad Monsoon:

At the end of normal year the farmer finds himself, economically, in the same position as he was at the beginning poor and struggling. If a bad year, when the monsoon fails are the crop is affected. He slips further down the ladder. The farming community gets impoverished many sink deeper into debt. Sub commit suicide.

Policies Leads to Slow Agricultural Growth:

Slow agricultural growth is a matter of concern most of India's population is dependent on rural employment for a living. Current agricultural practices are neither economically nor environmentally sustainable and India's yields for many agricultural commodities are low. Poorly maintained irrigation systems and lack of good extension services are among the factors responsible. Farmers' access to markets is hampered by poor roads, rudimentary market infrastructure, and excessive regulation.

Failure of Land Reforms:

The government failed to implement the land reforms measures and their of marginal farmers and land less labourers or protection of tenants from exploitation or eviction. The government reconciled itself to its failure to push for the progressive land reforms and shifted the emphasis to technological changes.

Unbalanced Agriculture Development:

Bulk of the increasing in output particularly food grains had been concentrated in a few progressive regions which were already enjoying high levels of consumption of food grains. As a result, the marketable surplus of food grains had been rising at a high rate in these states results in the accumulation of large stocks with government. With attendant problem of storage and distribution and the cost of storage and distribution.

Use of Technology is Inadequate:

Adoption of modern agricultural practices and use of technology is inadequate, hampered by ignorance, high costs and impracticality in the case of small land holdings. In India, farming practices are too haphazard and non-scientific and need some forethought before implementing any new technology. The screening of technology is important since all innovations are not relevant or attractive to all areas.

Conclusion:

In India, the agricultural sector is important from various perspectives, including its contribution to the gross national product, employment generation, and international trade. In modern times, the agricultural sector faces various challenges in driving the country's economic development. Despite these challenges, there is no doubt that by utilizing the opportunities available in the agricultural sector and coordinating these efforts, agricultural development will certainly be achieved. As a mature and civilized nation, we must preserve our agriculture. If this happens, Indian agriculture, its farmers, and the Indian economy will undoubtedly emerge as a developed economy.

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