

Preface

Agricultural productivity is an important concept that has been explored by geographers for various geographies. Through this thesis of mine I have attempted to analyse this concept and apply them for the development of a backward district of West Bengal, Malda. Along with agricultural productivity it has been observed that there is a regional imbalance in the district. An attempt is made to assess these imbalances and remedial measures have been suggested.

The study has been divided into the following nine chapters.

Chapter I Introduction: Presents the problem of varying agricultural productivity in the district and the regional imbalances present in the district. It also discusses the objective, scope and approach of the study alongwith the overview of related literature and models applied in the study.

Chapter II Physical Setting: Discusses the variability and similarity of a) Structure and relief b) Drainage c) Physical division-the terrain d) Soils e) Climate amongst the blocks and the regions of the district.

Chapter III Non-Physical Determinants: Discusses the various non-physical determinants viz. a) Technological factors –irrigation, other inputs, levels of agricultural modernization b) Population characteristics c) Cultural factors - ownership holding, tenural arrangement farm family characteristics and labour force d) Infrastructural services - marketing facilities, transport and accessibility and credit facilities. It shows the similarity and dissimilarity of the factors across regions and attempts to relate these determinants with overall productivity of the region.

Chapter IV Perspective of Regional Agriculture: Gives an overview of a) Land use profile b) Ground water potential c) Intensive cultivation programmes in the district.

Chapter V, Cropping Pattern, Crop Combination Region: Attempts to analyse the cropping pattern of the district and the direction in which the pattern is moving. It specifically analyses the growth trend of area under individual crops. Crop combination a major determinant of overall productivity is also discussed in this

chapter. To enable comparison of crop combination pattern the analysis has been performed for two periods, Period I (1993-94 to 1996-97) and Period II (1997-98 to 2000-01).

Chapter VI, Concept of Agricultural Productivity: This chapter gives a conceptual overview of agricultural productivity. Herein the productivity of individual factors of production viz. land, labour, capital have been discussed alongwith the concept of total factor productivity.

Chapter VII, Measurement of Agricultural Productivity: Deals with the measurement techniques of agricultural productivity and analyses the pattern of productivity in the district. Herein productivity index of individual crops have been analysed and the significance of growth trend of yield rates examined.

Chapter VIII, Major Findings- Problems and Prospects: As the name suggests discusses the findings of the study, illustrates the problems the regions face and their prospects in terms of agricultural growth.

Chapter IX, Corrective Measures Suggested: Suggests the measures that need to adopted at micro and macro level for he improvement of overall productivity and bridging the productivity differential amongst the regions.

I expect this attempt of mine to analyse agricultural productivity and regional imbalance for the district of Malda will be useful to researchers and policy makers in stimulating further discussion and methodological development.

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