

Review Article

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Agricultural Development Perspective : A Review of Three Approaches

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Bhatia, B.M., *Indian Agriculture : A Policy Perspective*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1988, pp.191, Rs.140/-
Etienne, G., *Food & Poverty, India Half, Won Battle*, Sage, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 272, Rs.175/-
Dhawan, B.D., *Irrigation in India's Agricultural Development : Productivity, Stability, Equity*, Sage, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 265, Rs.180/-

Sustainability of the level of growth, changes experienced in the structure of this growth and the overall reforms in the economic policy have together brought the agricultural policy perspectives at cross roads. Sustainability here would mean the capability of maintaining the present level of growth without affecting the eco-structure (Pearce, 1988). Therefore, the management of this situation under present conditions is entirely different compared to those confronted in mid-sixties or in early seventies. In the absence of any long term policy document for the most important sector of the economy, the directions are (unfortunately) received from the exogenous factors. Hence, a look in retrospect of the developmental patterns of agricultural sector becomes necessary.

There are a number of studies available on many aspects of the agricultural development. These analyses are from different backgrounds (disciplines, ideologies, training, etc.) and hence adopt diverse methodologies. Many times the conclusions are either diagonally opposite and confound the existing maze or astonishingly similar. On this background, a review is attempted here of three books together addressing to similar problems authored by very keen analysts of India's developmental process [Bhatia (1988), Etienne (1988) and Dhawan (1988)]. Obviously the authors follow three different methodologies under diverse situations. Our presumption about the similar issues in the three studies stems out of their exercise in tracking the movement of policy options over the last four decades.

Among these, the first approach followed by Bhatia involves a macro-view of the agricultural development scenario of the country bringing out the delicate spots in the development process. The macro analysis here involves a careful study of the trends across states and review of the policy framework. Bhatia successfully reaches micro-realities even while analysing the aggregate level data. The second approach is that of an anthropologist turned social economist. Being a close observer of village India for over four