



COMMERCIALISATION OF INDIAN AGRICULTURE

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Abstract

The main reason for the commercialization of agriculture was the imperialist policy of the British Government in India which was influenced by the political philosophy and ideologies prevalent in Britain. Its main basis was to meet the needs of imperialism in agriculture. The system of land revenue implemented by the government was intended to increase its income and please its supportive landlords. The British policy during this period was to use agricultural produce for Britain's needs. To transport agricultural produce from one place to another, the government spread a net of rolls. To meet the needs of Britain's textile industry and urban population, raw cotton was transported from different regions of India by rolls to the ports. From there he was sent to Britain. Thus India emerged as an agricultural colony of Britain in the nineteenth century.

In this process of commercialization of agriculture, the government contributed to the development of only those crops which were needed in foreign markets. For example, promoted the cultivation of American cotton in Punjab. Its purpose was to provide raw materials to the industries of Lancashire because after the American War of Independence raw materials had stopped coming from the American colonies. The government established demonstration farms to encourage such crops. In Bengal, the government emphasized on increasing the production of poppy, indigo and jute. The government itself used to decide to what extent and what variety the farmer would grow these crops.

Keywords: Commercialization, Agriculture, Government, Foreign markets, Cultivation

Introduction

Commerce is the exchange of goods on the market using an intermediary medium known as "money." The value of money establishes exchange values, or "prices," for things called "commodities," which may have other values, based on culture and nutrition, for example, but only their relative market values appear in the calculations that organise commercial transactions where people buy and sell things for money.

Commercialisation is a historical process that converts more things into commodities, draws more people into market exchange, commercialises more social transactions, and interprets more of the value of things through pricing. Commercialisation infiltrates societies with commodities, broadens commerce's geographical reach, and makes markets more pervasive in daily life. Commercialisation alters human experience by establishing commercial transactions in places where markets were previously absent or insignificant.

Initially in India, the villages were in the form of a unit where the needs were met by various things produced in the villages themselves. This situation gradually changed in the 19th century and agriculture started taking a commercial form. Under this system, the farmers started cultivating more of the export items. During British rule, India's agriculture was commercialised. Though agricultural markets and trade existed in quite organised forms and on a large scale prior to the British period, market expansion during the British period marked a qualitative and quantitative break. There were three major qualitative changes, according to Tirthankar Roy. „First, prior to British rule, product markets were constrained and subject to imperfections as a result of the multiplicity of weights and measures, backward and risky transportation systems, and widespread use of barter. The railways and British rule weakened these constraints.

Commercialisation of Agriculture - Phases:

In India, there were three major types of agricultural commercialisation. The first form of commercialisation was associated with plantation agriculture, particularly tea plantations in Bengal's northern districts. The second type of commercialisation became known as 'subsistence commercialisation' or the 'jute phase'. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, peasants in search of a subsistence level of living turned to intensive cash crops, primarily jute. A third type of commercialisation is referred to as 'dependent

commercialisation' or the 'indigo phase' of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Increased demand in Europe was a major stimulus for a completely unprofitable crop like indigo. This period was distinguished by the presence of foreign capital.

1. Civil War of America - Civil war started in America in 1861 AD. America was the major cotton producer. America could not export cotton due to civil war. Therefore, Indian farmers started exporting cotton by cultivating it. Apart from cotton, the export of food grains also increased.

2. Suez Canal - Suez Canal was built in 1869 AD, due to which the distance between India and England was reduced by about 4,000 miles. Therefore, there was an increase in the export of various food grains.

3. Development of means of transport - In the 19th century, the means of transport in India developed at a rapid pace. This made it convenient to carry goods from one place to another. Thus the development of means of transport encouraged the commercialization of agriculture.

4. Industrial Revolution - The industrial revolution in England had an impact on all the countries of Europe. Therefore, there was a flood of small and big factories all over Europe. These factories needed raw materials. Therefore, Indian farmers also started supplying raw materials. In this way agriculture automatically became commercialised.

5. Many European trading companies in India - Many European trading companies were working in India, which used to cultivate various things, for example-indigo, tea, opium, etc. Therefore, the influence of the companies gave a commercial form to the form of agriculture.

6. The introduction of money-economy- First, the introduction of money into the village accelerated the process of commercialization. Even during the Mughal reign, trade and money relations existed in the countryside. As the EIC desperately sought to acquire more and more territories, it insisted on paying land taxes in cash. The British rule introduced cash assessments into the land revenue system.

The former system of payment of land revenue in kind gradually fell out of favour. This forced the cultivator to sell some of his crop. However, this was not the only issue. In rural India, a new merchant class emerged, taking advantage of the peasantry's indebtedness.

Impact of commercialisation in India

Agriculture's commercialization could not bring about a change in the production organisation known as small peasant farming. Despite the commercial revolution, this production organisation remained the foundation of commercial crop cultivation. Agricultural development suffered as a result of a scarcity of resources required by farmers for technological advancement. In fact, the farmer has been forced to bear the burden of price volatility on multiple occasions. Information about high agricultural produce market prices did not reach the poor peasants. As a result, rising prices may not benefit small farmers. He was reduced to the status of a sharecropper or sub-tenant.

The vast army of peasants loses independence during the commercialization of agriculture (C.O.A.) process in a colonial economy. Even for a small amount of investment, peasants take advances; when combined with this production loan, reliance on moneylenders for consumption loans, as well as reliance on merchants for marketing their products, becomes insignificant.

C.O.A. did not result in the development of a strong and prosperous agricultural system. Peasant conditions remained precarious as before. C.O.A. products gained access to Indian and global markets. This brought the peasantry under the influence of market forces. Because of market imbalances, the peasant class suffered. It had a negative impact on the village economy's self sufficiency. Traditional agricultural-industry relationships were impacted by commercialization. Traditional Indian relationships acted as impediments to each other's development. The reliance on moneylenders and intermediaries grew. Peasants only received a small portion of the profit.

Despite its many negative consequences, commercialization was a progressive event. Commercialisation facilitated social exchange and enabled the transformation of the Indian economy into a capitalistic one. Commercialization connected India to the global economy. It resulted in the development of a high-level social and economic system. Commercialisation has made an important contribution to economic integration. It also laid the groundwork for the national economy's expansion. Commercialization of agriculture resulted in the expansion of national agriculture, and agricultural problems took on a national dimension.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this paper was to assess the significance of agricultural commercialization in contributing to this welfare improvement. Using three different welfare measures, our findings indicate that agricultural commercialisation remains important for households. Commercialization connected India to the global economy. It resulted in the development of a high-level social and economic system. Commercialisation has made an important contribution to economic integration. It also laid the groundwork for the national economy's expansion. Commercialization of agriculture resulted in the expansion of national agriculture, and agricultural problems took on a national dimension.

Rural development policies aimed at improving the well-being of rural households must acknowledge the variety of roles that farm and non-farm activities play for households with varying characteristics. A hybrid approach may be required, combining actions to increase productivity and access to agricultural markets, such as investment in infrastructure and technology, with policies to encourage diversification of livelihood strategies and access to nonfarm employment opportunities.

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