

Variation of Agriculture Sector Development: With Special Reference to West Bengal State

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ABSTRACT The present paper seeks to examine inter-district disparities in rural agricultural sector in West Bengal and its impact on agricultural development through a (cross-sectional study) inter-temporal analysis of 18 districts. Composite indices of rural economic have been prepared for selected 10 indicators, in the period of time 1980-81, 1990-91 and 2000-01. The technique of Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Rotate Factor Matrix (Kaiser Varimax Method) has been used to prepare the composite index of agricultural development and dimension index of agricultural development. The analysis reveals that extreme disparities continue to persist with respect to the availability of economic indicators in rural areas at the district level. The ranking pattern of districts in terms of development of rural infrastructure has also remained broadly unchanged. Similarly, a strong correlation between ranks of districts in economic infrastructure has been observed. Agricultural economic infrastructure was found to have a strong positive effect on gross value of agricultural produce and a strong negative effect on rural poverty. West Bengal agriculture should promote diversified and export oriented agriculture. Particular attention needs to be paid to the backward districts for more balanced regional development. This calls for increased investment in rural infrastructure by both the public and private sectors.