**Agricultural Sector before Independence**

The Indian agricultural sector before independence displayed mainly three characteristics which gave the lay down to the backwardness and stagnation of the economy.

***1. Low productivity***

Productivity is measured or counted in terms of the area of land cultivated and the corresponding amount of output that was harvested from it.

Just before independence, the levels of productivity were dangerously low to the point that it can be termed as backward.

This meant that despite huge areas of lands or fields being sown every season, the output was very low.

If we compare the productivity data of 1947 to that of 2008 and 2009, as is show in the table below, we find that the productivity of rice was about 20 times lower in 1947 as compared to the productivity in 2008.

For wheat, the productivity was four times less in 1947 as compared to that of 2008.

Similarly, if we compare the data of productivity of rice and wheat from 1947 to 2009, we find that the productivity of rice was fifty seven times lower in 1947 than in 2009 and the productivity of wheat was twelve times lower than what was in 2009.

Crop Productivity in kg per hectare

Year 1947 2007-2008 2008-2009

Wheat 660 2802 2806

Rice 110 2202 2177

**2. High levels of risk and instability**

The agricultural sector in pre-independence India was very prone to crumbling and highly volatile.

In other words, there was not stable production rate for various crops.

The main reason for this was improper infrastructure for perennial irrigation.

The farmers were mainly dependent upon rain for irrigating their fields due to lack of a proper and efficient canal network.

In times when the rainfall was good and abundant, the output was favorable and conversely, if the rainfall was scarce, the output took a huge drop.

There were no efforts made by the British rulers to ensure permanent ways for irrigation in the forms of wells or canals.

**3. Tension between the Zamindars and the tillers of the soil**

During the British rule, the main characteristic of Indian agriculture was the unending quarrel between the tillers and the Zamindars.

Tillers were the people who actually worked on the farms while the Zamindars were the people who owned those fields.

A case where the owner of the land was the actual farmer working on that field was very rare.

The Zamindars were never too concerned about the happiness and comfort of the workers as they were more concerned with maximizing their profits.

Almost all the Zamindars had given their ‘owned’ lands on rent to the tillers.

The tillers then worked on those lands and grew crops.

The Zamindars took all the output from the lands and only gave the tillers just enough share of the total output to survive.

Due to such a huge imbalance of wealth between the factions, the obvious result was a stand-still and deterioration in the economic conditions of the country.

**Factors that caused the stagnation of India agriculture**

Now that we know the conditions of agriculture sector in pre independence time, we shall now look at the causes and factors which caused this situation. There are mainly two factors that caused the backwardness of the agricultural sector.

**Indian agriculture after independence**

Despite some stagnation during the later modern era the independent Republic of india was able to develop a comprehensive agricultural programe.

In the years since its independence, India has made immense progress towards food security. Indian population has tripled, and food-grain production more than quadrupled. There has been a substantial increase in available food-grain per capita.

Before the mid-1960s, India relied on imports and food aid to meet domestic requirements. However, two years of severe drought in 1965 and 1966 convinced India to reform its agricultural policy and that it could not rely on foreign aid and imports for food security. India adopted significant policy reforms focused on the goal of food grain self-sufficiency. This ushered in India's Green revolution. It began with the decision to adopt superior yielding, disease resistant wheat varieties in combination with better farming knowledge to improve productivity. The state of Punjab led India's Green Revolution and earned the distinction of being the country's breadbasket.