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Reviews in Brief

Textbook on Agricultural Communication: Process and Methods, A.S. Sandhu, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993. Pp. xiv+213. Rs. 65.00.

Extension Programme Planning, A.S. Sandhu, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1994. Pp. ix+158. Rs. 55.00.

The above-noted books provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of communication in the field of agricultural extension and the methods of extension programme planning in the field of agricultural development. The first book is organised into two parts. The first part deals with the conceptual and theoretical framework of agricultural communication, the meaning, nature and forms of communication, relationship in communication, communication media and technologies and the role of key communicators in social systems. The second part discusses various agricultural extension methods and audio-visual aids in planning an effective communication strategy. The major focus of the book is on the operationalisation of the concepts such as communication competence and communication effectiveness in terms of comprehension, perceived validity and utility on the part of the receiver and on the factors influencing the effectiveness and hence the choice of extension teaching methods. The book highlights the importance of effective communication in promoting technological change in farming and the need for planning an effective agricultural communication strategy.

The second book is an effort to integrate the information available on extension literature and on this basis develops a planning programme that is best suited to developing countries and India in particular. Divided into twelve chapters, it discusses the role of extension programme planning in the development of technical and managerial skills of farmers, research workers and professional extension workers. It describes the various concepts, philosophy, principles and methods of planning and evaluation of rural development programmes. It presents the various concepts and importance of extension programme planning. Based on a critical analysis of the various principles and models of the programme planning process, the author presents a set of principles and a model of programme planning that are most suited to Indian conditions. The various phases and steps involved in the planning process are described in detail. The author then reviews the research work carried out in this area and critically examines the legitimacy of its philosophy, principles, methods and the purpose of programme planning as well as the need and the mechanism of people's involvement. The two appendices on the principles and various models of extension programme planning would help to refresh the understanding of the readers. The book is lucid in its presentation.

Those interested in the field of agricultural communication and extension planning would find these books useful as reference guides.

Trade Pessimism and Regionalism in African Countries: The Case of Groundnut Exporters, Ousmane Badiane and Sambouh Kinteh, Research Report 97, International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington, D.C., U.S.A., 1994. Pp. viii+81.

This report is an outcome of the research work undertaken to study the importance of regional agricultural trade in West Africa initiated by the International Food Policy Research Institute in 1989. Specifically, it deals with the contribution of the groundnut sector to the development of the African Groundnut Council (AGC) countries (The Gambia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan) during the 1960s to 1980s and analyses the long-term prospects of groundnut demand on global and regional markets. The study brings out clearly that the share of groundnut exports in the total world exports has been declining which may be attributed to the domestic sector and macro-economic policies in AGC countries resulting in adverse developments on international markets, such as falling global demand and declining world market prices.

The analysis of production and export performance of the groundnut sector revealed that AGC countries accounted for 24 per cent of production between 1961 and 1965, which declined to 10 per cent in 1982-87, whereas the share of export of groundnut products decreased from 62 per cent to 20 per cent during the same period. There was a surge in the production of other oilseeds like soybean and palm oil in Asia and South America and of rapeseed and sunflower seed production in the European Community. The domestic policies in AGC countries adversely affected the country's groundnut production and exports, suppressed producer prices directly and appreciated the country's real exchange rates. This resulted in substantial reduction in output, export volumes, export revenues in individual member countries and the AGC as a whole.

The analysis of prospects of groundnut exports on global and regional markets reveals a notable fact that the stagnating trends in world groundnut demand will not have any stimulating effect on AGC groundnut exports. On the other hand, the export potential on regional front was studied using a constant market share model. Demand on regional markets is likely to increase rapidly, as indicated by high price and income elasticities of groundnut import demand and a relatively high import expenditure elasticity for AGC groundnuts. This would not be possible without reorientation of the domestic economic policies relating to groundnut marketing and pricing policies, protection of import-competing sectors and foreign exchange control and other restrictions relating to trade that cause the real exchange rate to appreciate. Thus the report concludes: "Regional markets could indeed play a significant role in African oilseed trade and market shares could be maintained or expanded, if exporters were able to cut unit costs in production, processing and trading."

Asking the Earth: Farms, Forestry and Survival in India, Winin Pereira and Jeremy Seabrook, Earthscan Publications Ltd., London, U.K., 1990. Pp. xii+228. £ 7.95.

This book is basically a historical recount of the period of transition from traditional agriculture to commercial agriculture in the wake of British colonial rule in India. The eleven papers included in the book as chapters were originally published in *Anusandan*, a periodical of Maharashtra Prabodhan Seva Mandal. The studies narrate the ruthless and callous attitude of the Britishers, which has resulted in ruining and impoverishing a rich nation like India.

The British imposed several restrictions in the form of land revenue, forest laws and substitution of food crops by cash crops which jeopardised the whole system of farming. As the authors say: "The aggregate result of British policies is evident from the fact that there were practically no growth in food output during the last decades of British rule, but that growth increased rapidly after independence" (p. 12).

As one of the founding members of the Maharashtra Prabodhan Seva Mandal, which was formed with the intention of helping the poorest farmers, Winin Pereira "monitored the changing fashions of Western-inspired development, and the ways in which even the best of intentions often end up by benefiting the well-to-do, at the expense both of the poor and of the environment." This project was conducted as an experiment in Nasik and Thane districts of Maharashtra with little success. In this context, Pereira came into contact with the Warli Adivasis, stayed and worked with them on farming and forestry. Many interesting characteristics of their lifestyle patterns were noted. Before the advent of the British, the Warlis were self-reliant, self-sufficient, with vast knowledge about various agricultural techniques, forestry, livestock, herbal medicine, etc. The British devastated the forests for commercial purposes and emphasised 'modern' cultivation, imposed regressive taxes on lands possessed by the Warlis, denied them free access to their own jungles. All these modes of impoverishment brought down many of the Warlis below subsistence level. The authors believe that "enforcing conformity with mainstream beliefs through the educational, health, agricultural and other sub-systems is a certain method of destroying sustainable knowledge. Modernization, if necessary at all, should be an adaptation of good traditional principles and methods to the problems of today, with inputs from new science and technology used only where they are not self-destructive" (pp. 59-60).

The authors have highlighted the problems emanating from the technological and social intervention of the British in the form of supply of obsolete equipments, use of new hybrid varieties, entry of transnational companies and use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. To sum up, the book is a blend of philosophy and economics which provides insight into the socio-economic and environmental problems consequent to the colonisation of India by the British. Quoting Richard Lannoy from his work *The Speaking Tree* (1971) which explores the whole range of Indian civilisation and culture, the book concludes pithily: "....it is not Indians who need to be squeezed into the western mould, but rather that the western system itself is incompatible with life on this planet."

Rural Household Savings and Investment: A Study of Some Selected Villages in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, P.G.K. Panikar, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, 1992. Pp. 114. Rs. 50.00.

This study aims at examining the factors affecting the levels of savings, the factors influencing the rates of saving such as ability to save, desire to save and motivation for saving and the manner of disposition of savings among rural households in the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Four districts, two each from both the states were selected for the purpose. The data were collected from four villages, one from each district, namely, Chemmaruthy and Ramapuram from Kerala and Vellanguli and Kilamandur-Karuppur from Tamil Nadu. Using purposive sampling method, a total of 445 households were selected on the basis of different occupational groups.

The study begins with the analysis in general of the characteristics of the selected areas with respect to their level of development, demographic characteristics, structure of their economies, employment levels, occupational pattern, infrastructural facilities, etc. Then it analyses in particular the characteristics of the sample households. The study noted some differences in terms of the levels of education, size and pattern of assets and income levels among the sample households. Savings among households were estimated using income account method and balance sheet method. According to the income account method, in terms of the rate of savings, the results showed that the majority of the sample households in three of the selected villages were dissavers. The average savings were negative in the two sample villages from Kerala and comparatively low in one of the sample villages from Tamil Nadu. The rate of savings ranged from -9 per cent in Chemmaruthy to about 18 per cent in Kilamandur-Karuppur. On the contrary, the analysis according to the balance sheet method showed that a large majority were savers in all the four villages. The average saving per households also showed a substantial improvement, ranging from over Rs. 628 in Kilamandur-Karuppur to Rs. 4,903 in Ramapuram. The analysis of the factors influencing the rate of savings revealed that income is the most important determinant of savings, i.e., the higher the income, the higher is the rate of savings and vice versa. As regards the disposal of savings, a relatively high proportion of the savings was in the form of financial assets. For the majority of the sample households provision for education and wedding expenses of their children constituted the principal motivation for saving and that investment for expanding business activities and purchase of land was of a low order of priority. The study concludes that a high proportion of savings of the sample household is unproductive and reiterates that it is not the level of household savings but rather the pattern of its disposition which requires utmost attention.

Introduction to Agrometeorology (Second Edition), H.S. Mavi, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1994. Pp. ix+281. Rs. 75.00.

First published in 1986, this second edition of the book highlights the importance of the science of meteorology in increasing the efficiency of agricultural operations and improving the quality and quantity of agricultural production. It retains the original framework of the first edition, but adds one new chapter on "Climate Change and Crop Production" which probes into the probable causes of climate change and the serious implications of greenhouse effect and global warming of ecosystems and crop production. In general, the book deals with many of the general meteorological principles, techniques and methods which can be used in improving crop production. Water is considered to be one of the most important input in crop production and efforts have been made to utilise this resource economically by retaining moisture content and minimising loss due to evaporation. The new chapter included in the book deals with the probable causes of weather and climate changes and its direct and indirect effects on crop production at the global level and with particular reference to major cereals like rice and wheat in India. The need is emphasised to understand the prevailing agro-climates thoroughly and scientifically integrate them into agro-climatic regions to ensure sustained agricultural production. This book would be immensely useful to those interested in specialising in the field of agrometeorology.