



AGRARIAN CRISIS AND FARMERS' SUICIDE IN INDIA: WITH REFERENCE TO KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT :

This paper aims at the study of agrarian crisis as the main cause of farmer suicide in India with special reference to Karnataka. Among the various socio-economic issues, farmers' suicide is getting rapid attention. As India is an agricultural based society and farmer is one of the pillars or the backbones of the society, is not getting the worthy attention and facilities to which he/she is really capable of. With the growth of various issues in the current economy, agrarian crisis stands to be a burning issue. In current scenario various kinds of agrarian crisis are leading to farmers' suicide. On an average among the total suicides in India, 9.4% are the farmers and the number is still increasing. The paper also mentions findings and remedies through which farmer's suicide can be controlled. In the present condition agricultural reforms and other measures to save farmers from bankruptcy has become a necessity. As far as Indian economy is concerned, farmers' welfare and agricultural reforms have become an urgent need.



KEYWORDS : Agriculture, Farmer, Suicide, Agrarian crisis, Credit.

INTRODUCTION

India with the 121.09 crore population (2011 census), second highly populated and fast developing young country in the world. India is the land of more than 6 lakh villages, Agriculture in India is considered as the backbone of the Indian Economy which gambles with the nature. More than 52% of Indian population directly or indirectly depends upon agriculture. According to 2011 census, 31.16% of its population resides in the urban area and the rest 68.84% in the rural area. In 2000, urban birthrate was 20.7 as against 27.6 in the rural area. In 1901, working population in primary sector was 72%, in secondary sector it was 12% and in tertiary sector, was 16%, in 1951 it is 72%, 11% and 17%, but in 2011-12 it is 48.9 % in primary sector, 24.3% in secondary sector and 26.8% in tertiary sector.

Farmers' suicide become the major challenge for the State as well as the Central government. In the year 2015, 12,602 farmers committed suicide and on an average 1.4 farmers per an hour. It is very sad to say that the backbone of the Indian economy is in worst condition and the number is increasing day by day. If we see the fact that more number of farmers who commit suicide are the commercial crop growers. The State and Central governments were trying their best to sort out this problem but they are also unable to control the very sad and mentally depressed farmers from committing suicide. In India there are 70 agricultural related universities which were established to give something new to the farmers for better farming and more return oriented products.

AGRARIAN CRISIS

There are so many agrarian crisis found in Indian agriculture like, uncertain rain fall, illiteracy among the farmers, lack of irrigation facilities, lack of financial facilities, inefficient market, existence of small holdings, improper minimum support price, over dependency on agriculture, lack of small scale and cottage industries in rural area, lack of knowledge about the use of modern agro-technologies, low wages, increase in marginal labour, technical change in the agriculture, urbanization, industrialization, migration, accusation of land for several development purposes and uncertain climate conditions. All these are directly related to agriculture crisis. These crisis lead low productivity in farms. Other than this he/she facing some family related problems like marriage of his daughters and farm related issues.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on secondary data. The secondary data is collected from Census reports, NSSO reports, News Papers, Books, Journals and Magazines etc. simple statistical tools like average and percentage methods were used to analyze the data.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyze the needs of credit to the agriculture activity
- To examine various financial sources for agriculture in India and Karnataka
- To study various causes for the Farmers' suicide in India and Karnataka
- To suggest remedies to control farmers' suicide

FARMERS IN INDIA

Indian farmers are un-organized and illiterate beings. They are very poor and cannot even arrange the amount for agricultural activities and they need credit for this. They are hesitating to adapt modern technology in their agriculture because of their poverty and ignorance. They need credit in three types: a) Short term credit for buying seeds, fertilizers, pay land revenue and give wages. b) Medium term credit for buying Cattles, agricultural equipments and for developing land. c) Long term credit for digging well, purchase of land and permanent repair of land. Agricultural credit can also be divided into: productive credit, unproductive credit and consumption credit. Sources of agricultural credit was mainly divided into two parts, one is non-institutional sources and another is institutional sources. In non-institutional sources, money lenders play an important role and they charge high rate of interest. The institutional sources are mainly the commercial banks charging very less interest but the sanctioning of the credit takes time. The nationalization of private banks in 1969 and 1980's, establishment of Cooperative Credit Societies, Rural Regional Banks, NABARD, these all banking institutions are playing a major role in providing all types of credit to the agriculture and agro-allied activities in India.

Table -01 Share of Different Agencies in Rural Credit (2004)

Agency	Share in total credit (%)
Money Lenders	70
Public Sector Banks	10
Co-operative Banks and Societies	9
Government Loans	1
Self Help Groups(SHG's)	1
Others	9
Total	100

Sources: Hindustan Times – IIEF Study (2004)

The above table shows the sources of agricultural credit, in which the money lenders play an important role and his share in total credit was 70%, whereas the public sector bank, co-operative banks and societies, government loans, SHGs and others giving total 30% of credit to the agriculture.

Table -02 State wise suicide committed by Farmers/ Cultivators during 2015

Sl. No.	States/UT	No.of Farmers/Cultivators Suicide	Sl. No.	States/UT	No.of Farmers/Cultivators Suicide
1	Maharashtra	3030	19	Tripura	01
2	Telangana	1358	20	Jammu & Kashmir	00
3	Karnataka	1197	21	Himachal Pradesh	00
4	Chhattisgarh	854	22	Uttarakhand	00
5	Madhya Pradesh	581	23	Delhi	00
6	Andhra Pradesh	516	24	Pondicherry	00
7	Uttar Pradesh	145	25	Kerala	03
8	Punjab	100	26	Goa	00
9	Assam	84	27	Daman & Diu	00
10	Gujarat	57	28	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	00
11	Odisha	23	29	Lakshadweep	00
12	Haryana	28	30	Jharkhand	00
13	Sikkim	15	31	West Bengal	00
14	Arunachal Pradesh	07	32	Bihar	00
15	Rajasthan	03	33	Mizoram	00
16	Tamil Nadu	02	34	Nagaland	00
17	Meghalaya	02	35	Chandigarh	00
18	Manipur	01	36	Andaman	00

Sources:Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2015 (<http://ncrb.gov.in/>)

The above table shows the State and Union territory wise farmers' suicide in India in the year 2015. Maharashtra is in the first place with the highest suicide of farmers that is 3030. Telanganais in the second place with 1358 farmers' suicide and Karnataka is in the third place with 1197 farmers' suicide. The agriculture in this state was well developed and commercial agriculture was followed in these states. Many government policies and non-payment of dues to the farmers are the cause for the suicide.

No framers committed suicide in Union territories and states like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Mizoram and Nagaland. In Manipur and Tripura we find one case of farmer suicide registered in each state.

Table-03 Features of suicides in farming sector during 2013-15

Years	Suicides in farming sector	Total suicide	Percentage
2013	11,772	1,34,799	8.7%
2014	12,360	1,31,666	9.4%
2015	12,602	1,33,623	9.4%
Percentage Change	2.0%	1.5%	

Sources:Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2015 (<http://ncrb.gov.in/>)

The above table shows the farmer's suicide from the year 2013 to 2015. In the year 2013, 11,772 farmers committed suicide. This was 8.7% of total suicide (1, 34,799) in India. In the year 2014, 12,360 farmers committed suicide. This was 9.4% of total suicide (1, 31,666) in India, and in the year 2015, 12,602 farmers committed suicide in India. This was 9.4% of total suicide (13, 36,233) in India. This shows yearly increase in the farmer's suicide.

Table-04 Percentage shows of Major causes of suicides among Farmers /Cultivators during 2015

Sl.No.	Causes	Percentage
1	Bankruptcy of Indebtedness	38.7%
2	Farming related issues	19.5%
3	Family problems	11.7%
4	Illness	10.5%
5	Drug abuse /alcoholic addiction	4.1%
6	Marriage related issues	2.0%
7	Poverty	1.1%
8	Property dispute	1.1%

Sources: Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2015 (<http://ncrb.gov.in/>)

The above table shows the major causes for the farmer's suicide in India. 38.70% of farmers committed suicide due to bankruptcy and indebtedness, this is the main cause and it shows the improper utilization of credit. 19.50% of farmers commit suicide due to the farm related issues and total of these two was 58.20%. Rest family related problems is 11.7%, farmers commit suicide due to illness is 10.5%, Drug abused and alcoholic addiction 4.1%, Marriage related issues 2.0%, Poverty 1.1% and property disputes 1.1% , Total 41.80% farmers suicide are not related to the farm issues. So the main cause of farmer's suicide in bankruptcy of indebtedness and farms related issue.

Table 05- Age group wise farmers/Cultivators who have committed suicide during 2015

Sex	Below 18	18-30 years	30-60	60 & above	Total
Male	31	1,396	5,455	684	7,566
Female	11	117	275	36	441
Transgender	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42	1,513	5,730	722	8,007
% Shows	0.5%	18.9%	71.6%	9.0%	100%

Sources: Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India 2015 (<http://ncrb.gov.in/>)

The above table shows age and gender wise farmers suicide during 2015. Total 7,566 male farmers committed suicide and 441 female farmers committed suicide and no transgender committed suicide. Among total farmers suicide, only 42 (05%) of farmers were below the age of 18 years. 1,513 (18.9%) farmers were belonging to the age group of 18-30 years. 5,730 (71.6%) farmers were belonging to the age group of 30-60 years and 722 (9.0%) were belong to the age of 60 years and above aged farmers. This show high suicidal among the age group of 30-60 years. These farmers are the main pillars of the family and their suicide affect their family very much.

FARMERS IN KARNATAKA

Karnataka, historically known for its rich agriculture land, has begun a number of reforms for the agrarians. The Cooperative Credit Society was established in Kanaginahal, Gadag, Karnataka which is the first ever Cooperative Credit Society in India. The importance credit was realized very early in the region.

Table-06Details of Farmers suicides in Karnataka from 1-7-2015 to 3-06-2016

Sl.No.	District	No.offarmerssuicide	% of state total	No.of farmers suicide per lakh farming family
1	Haveri	125	8.40	57
2	Mandya	118	7.92	30
3	Mysuru	113	7.58	29
4	Belagavi	112	7.52	21
5	Kalaburagi	25	5.03	13
6	Hassan	74	4.97	17
7	Chikkamagaluru	74	4.97	33
8	Tumakuru	72	4.83	17
9	Raichur	69	4.63	21
10	Chitradurga	69	4.63	24
11	Yadgir	60	4.03	26
12	Dharwad	60	4.03	42
13	Shivamogga	60	4.03	28
14	Bidar	54	3.62	22
15	Vijayapur	47	3.15	14
16	Davanagere	46	3.09	16
17	Gadag	44	2.92	27
18	Koppal	35	2.35	16
19	Ramangar	31	2.08	11
20	Bagalkot	30	2.01	13
21	Bellary	29	1.95	11
22	Chikkballapur	23	1.54	11
23	Uttara Kannada	14	0.94	7
24	Kolar	11	0.74	5
25	C.R.Nagar	10	0.67	5
26	Bengaluru (Ru)	9	0.60	5
27	Dakshin Kannada	9	0.60	4
28	Udupi	9	0.60	4
29	Kodagu	7	0.47	10
30	Bangalore (Urban)	1	0.07	1
Total		1490	100	19

Sources:Farmer Suicide in Karnataka-May 2017 (ISEC)

This table shows the district-wise farmers suicides in Karnataka from 01-07-2015 to 03-06-2016. The highest farmers suicide found in Haveri district that is 125 (8.4% of total suicides in Karnataka) and per lakh farm family, 57 families were affected from this. The Lowestfarmers' suicide found in Bangalore urban that is only 1 farmer suicide and 0.07% of total Karnataka. Single digit farmers' suicide was found in five district and they are Bengaluru (Rural), Dakshin Kannada, Udupi, Kodagu and Bengaluru (Urban). In other districts we find double digit of farmers' suicide.

Table-07 Suicide reported in agriculture in Karnataka

Sl No	Years	Suicide
1	2000	2630
2	2001	2510
3	2002	2340
4	2003	2680
5	2004	1960
6	2005	1880
7	2006	1720
8	2007	2140
9	2008	1740
10	2009	2280
11	2010	2590
12	2011	2100
13	2012	1880
14	2013	1400
15	2014	770
16	2015	1197
17	2016	1490

Sources: Farmer Suicide in Karnataka-May 2017 (ISEC)

The above table shows year wise farmers suicide in Karnataka from 2000 to 2016. In the year 2000, 2630 farmers were committed suicide and in the year 2016, 1460 farmers committed suicide. After all the measures taken by the government like Ganga Kalyana Yojana, Krishi Honda Yojana and so many others the number of farmer's suicide is not coming down, some time it decreases and some time it increases.

Table-08 Month wise number of farmer suicides in Karnataka during 2015-16

Sl No	Month	Suicide
1	July	211
2	August	226
3	September	162
4	October	237
5	November	130
6	December	110
7	January	107
8	February	80
9	March	74
10	April	76
11	May	51
12	June	26

Sources: Farmer Suicide in Karnataka-May 2017 (ISEC)

The above table shows farmers suicide during the month wise for the year 2015-16 in Karnataka. In July 2015 it's 211 and in June 2016 it's just 26, shows decrease in farmers' suicide.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

- 1) Agrarian crisis are the main causes for farmers' suicide in India as well as in Karnataka.
- 2) Farmers of commercial crops are more in suicide.

- 3) Suicide of farmers is maximum between the age group of 30 to 60 years.
- 4) Suicide of the farmers is in decreasing trend.
- 5) Credit facility should be observed and monitored carefully.
- 6) More productive credit facility should be provided.
- 7) Free Medical facilities to be provided.
- 8) Government should arrange mass marriages.

CONCLUSION:

The agricultural dependency is increasing as the population is growing rapidly. We find disguised unemployment in rural areas. Govt. has not given proper importance for the development of small-scale and cottage industries which is hampering employability in rural areas. The banking system is yet to take certain measures for the welfare of farmers. They should provide proper financial support and guidance to the farmers to overcome from their financial difficulties and crisis. The Govt. need to provide extra care and attention towards the farming sector by facilitating them with subsidies, minimum support price, marketing facilities, warehouse facilities and other farmer friendly reforms. Moreover, farmers need to be provided with all the facilities to raise their economic and social standard and Govt. is providing all kind of support the farmers and it is yet to be reached.

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