



Agrarian Distress and Farmers Suicides

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture is the main stay for more than 60% of Indian population. Agriculture has been attributed to failure of monsoons and gambling with rainfall. More than 80% of farmers belongs to the category of marginal and small scale farmers. The failure of monsoon lead to draught, lack of better prices and exploitation by the middleman are making the farmer caught by debt crop.

The unbearable debt burden on the one side and apathy by the administrators and policy makers to understand suicides in real terms making the farmer to commit suicide. Further, the impact of globalisation, increased cost of cultivation making the farmers to commit suicide without finding best other alternatives to lead a normal life.

The need of the hour is to declare agriculture similar to manufacturing industry and to provide similar status so that innovative agricultural activities may be started.

Keywords-- Distress, Suicide, Industry, Marginal Crops, Indebtedness, Agriculture

farmers suicide and a report on the same “Farmers suicide in Karnataka A scientific Analysis” claims that suicides emerged on the ground of psychological causes, not economic one and treating the suicides merged on account of alcoholism. Further, the expert committee report said that these suicides emerged on account of alcoholism and unfortunately yet debt is not identified as a driver of suicide.

The Global Burden of Disease (GBD) estimates from 1990 to 2010 the years of life cost (YLL) due to suicides increased by 127% in India and the rank of suicide in causes of YLL moved up from 20th to 8th. The official data available for reported suicides for India in 2010 at 134599 as per the National Crimes Records Bureaur (NCRB) that it compiles from the police states is less than half of the GBD estimates. The farmers suicides are also not recorded properly and termed either as alcoholism suicides or psychological pressure in Karnatak at present, an unfortunate wrong explanation.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Agriculture is the industry for rural folk and it is the backbone of Indian economy. Agriculture and allied sectors contribute 22% of LDP of India and about 65 to 70% depends upon agriculture for their livelihood. Agriculture is assuming the nature of industry and unfortunately lacks financial support. Agriculture has become a most critical industry on account of unfortunate reasons like uncertainly of mansoons, nonavailability of credit, increasing prices of seeds, pesticides and fertilizers. Enhanced indebtedness of agrarian community the single major reason for agrarian distress is leading to agriculturist suicides where the farmers ends his life on account of failure of crop, and or failing to get the expected price and hence farmers are comminuting suicide finding no alternative.

I. INTRODUCTION

Indian agriculturists are depended on “rain farming” but unfortunately including Karnataka there are no usual rains for the last three years and loss on account of rain failure is quite astronomical. The globalisation process has damaged the fate of small and marginal farmers severely and hence farmers are committing suicide and these suicides are consequences of heavy indebtedness, failure of rainfall, failure of assured price for the grown agricultural products. More than 25,000 peasants committed suicide since 1997 when seed saving was transferred to global gaints and multinational corporations have started controlling the seed supply. Added to these woes government of Karnataka denial of

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- (1) To study all India farmers suicide
- (2) To study suicides in India state wise.
- (3) To study farmers suicide in Karnataka
- (4) To study the debt outstanding in cooperatives and nationalised banks.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is a secondary data based study. Data collected from National Crime Branch, journals and websites. The collected data is presented in the form of table for an easy analysis.

Limitation

The study is based on secondary data and secondary data compiled from various journals, started question in Lokasabha, seminar presentations and daily Karnataka newspapers.

Agrarian Distress

One has to understand clearly the reasons behind agrarian crisis in Karnataka. The farmers in Karnataka are undergoing a painful phase since in the last few years a whopping 2909 farmers committed suicide across the state during the last decade 2012-14 to July 31, 2012 (Hindu Aug 24th 2012). The tragic incidence of farmers suicides occurred on account of crop failure, drought floods, diseases and a high cost of farming. The previous researchers clearly tells us that a major reason behind agrarian distress and suicides by the farmers on account of heavy unbearable indebtedness.

The total debt of agriculturists in the organised sector are shown in the table-4

Causes of suicides by farmers in Karnataka

The list of causes of farmers suicides is given below.

- (1) Heavy indebtedness
- (2) Marginal land holdings
- (3) High cost of inputs
- (4) Minimum support price
- (5) Crop failure
- (6) Financial stress
- (7) Scarcity of water
- (8) Failure of monsoons
- (9) Failure of secured assets to instill confidence the farmers.
- (10) Family problem
- (11) Changes in economic system
- (12) Low income profile
- (13) Failure to get expected price for the produce.

Present Situation in Karnataka

Suicides in Karnataka is on the raise and in the present year so far 456 agriculturists committed suicide. The main reason is failure of agriculture on account of continuous drought for the last continued three years. In

the last year 1433 agriculturists committed suicide and unfortunately the poor agriculturists families are becoming orphans without a proper care. A compensative of Rs. 5 lakhs each was distributed only in 175 cases the remaining cases are not scrutinized properly. During the last year out of 1433 agriculturists suicide only 985 are settled, 452 rejected 6 cases are pending and 20 are going to settled shortly. The government orders are improper and unable to understand by the administrators and hence a joint strategy by central government nationalised banks and cooperative sector is essential to look into the matter seriously.

On account of short of rainfall crop failures are estimated at Rs. 60 crores and lack of rains on account of failure of monsoons resulted in crop failure in 32 lakh hectare of land. As per one estimate 3000 families committed suicide in Karnataka between 1998 and 2006 (Assadi 1998).

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vasavi (1999) reported that indebtedness lead to economic crisis. Further the researcher said that increase use of hybrid seeds, chemical fertilisers and pesticides, causing the erosion of soil fertility are also responsible for the indebtedness of farmers.

Vandana Shiva (2006) attempts to locate the crisis or the suicide to the negative growth of agrarian economy in the in recent past.

Judd. (2006). Hill et al.(2005): Fiska A et al.(2005), Lavim et al.(2006), in their research works they have clearly reportedly that suicides by the rural population are emerging as a significant category in the whole suicide data in many parts of the globe.

The research findings of Hawton 1999 reveals from UK, USA C Browning 2008), Australisa (Jhdd 2006) and Japan Nishimara et al.2004), reported higher rates of suicides.

VI. CONCLUSION & SURVEY FINDINGS

All India farmers suicides are given in the Table-1. It was in the beginning 16415 reduced to 12360 by the end of 2014. The suicidal data varies right from the year 2001 to 2014. Further, in some of the states the suicides are committed by farmers without availing any help and if help would have extended the suicidal proneness might have further reduced.

Table-2 relates to the suicides in India from 2000-01 to 2009-10. Highest suicides reported from Karnataka right from 2000-01 to 2009-10. The second highest suicides 5403 reported from Maharashtra and third highest suicides reported from Andhra Pradesh. Kerala being the highest literacy state also agriculturists 1315 committed suicides.

Table-3 reveals data about farmers suicides in Karnataka. Table reveals that highest number of suicides took place in Bengaluru city from the year 2001 to 2003. During the year 2006-07 142 suicides took place in Bengaluru district also. In Hassan the most developed district 126 farmers committed suicides unfortunately. 117 suicides reported from Belgaum and 99 from Chitradurga. During the year 2012-13, 1875 agriculturists committed suicide (Vijayavani, 15 Nov. 2016).

Table-4 highlights indebtedness of farmers. Total debt outstanding is Rs. 12700 crores consisting Rs. 1400 long term, Rs. 1300 crores medium term and short term Rs. 10000 crores. The debt recovery is hampered by various reasons like crop failure, no harvest in certain cases, even if harvest is done no better ruling prices and in many cases farmers do not get even the cost of production. The debts outstanding in the nationalised banks stood at Rs. 109685. The outstanding debt consist of long term Rs. 68205 crores and medium terms Rs. 41480 crores.

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Table-1 : All India figures for farmers suicide 2001-14

Year	Total Farmers suicide
2001	16415
2002	17971
2003	17164
2004	18241
2005	17131
2006	17060
2007	16632
2008	16796
2009	17368
2010	15964
2011	14027
2012	13754
2013	11772
2014	12360

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/farmer's_suicide_in_India

Table-2 : Suicides in India 2000-01 to 2009-2010 (Statewise)

States	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	T
Andhrapradesh	191	267	313	393	1126	657	532	490	390	77	4436
Karnataka	2630	2505	2340	708	271	163	176	182	143	14	9132
Maharashtra	-	50	122	173	632	595	2355	590	627	259	543
Punjab	-	-	-	13	11	32	19	24	10	18	127
Kerala	-	-	841	50	101	119	112	68	22	2	1315
Orissa	-	2	1	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	8
Gujarath	-	13	6	3	108	125	149	4	1	-	409
Tamilnadu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2
Total	2821	2837	3623	1340	2249	1696	3343	1359	1194	370	20832

Source: Rajyasabha unstarred question No. 513, dated 20-02-2009 and Lokasabha started No.153 dated 14-07-2009 (file//g) html/1-612010

Tabl-3 :Farmers suicide in Karnataka

	2001	Rank	2002	Rank	2003	Rank	2006-2007
Bengaluru City	1352	1	1440	1	830	1	-
Bengaluru Dt.	670	2	789	2	500	2	142
Davanagere	361	16	692	3	356	4	67
Gulbarga	452	8	658	4	164	20	34
Belgaum	448	9	576	5	363	3	117
Shimoga	330	19	573	6	296	5	77
Dakshina Kannada	429	10	554	7	295	6	21
Tumkur	539	4	534	8	290	7	74
Chitradurga	339	17	474	9	219	10	99
Chikkamagalur	394	14	417	10	244	9	55
K. Railways	196	26	409	11	278	8	-
Bellary	323	20	386	12	211	13	47
Mysore	462	7	382	13	207	14	19
Kolar	515	5	380	14	179	17	33
Mysore city	607	3	367	15	212	12	-
Coorg	393	15	352	16	185	15	44
Mandya	404	12	345	17	168	18	57
Udupi	180	27	342	18	185	15	4
Hassan	425	11	337	19	165	19	126
Bagalakote	234	23	301	20	218	11	37
Haveri	168	28	249	21	122	23	53
BIjapur	321	21	230	22	144	21	-
Koppala	123	31	224	23	120	24	59
Dharwad	306	22	221	24	127	22	40
Uttar Kannada	338	18	205	25	120	25	17
Bidar	214	25	126	26	66	30	56
Gadag	129	30	150	27	96	26	26
Raichur	226	24	149	28	68	28	13
Hubli-Dharwad city	463	6	147	29	92	27	-
KGF	396	13	104	30	68	29	-
Chamarajanagar	144	29	102	31	63	31	12

Source: G. Gururaj Seminar presentation of farmers suicide in Karnataka, 20 Oct, 2003. Dept of Epidemiology National Institute of Mental and Neurological Sciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru.

Table-4 : Debts of Agriculturists in Karnataka (in crores)

Cooperative Secotr	Rs.	Nationalised Banks	Rs.
Long term	1400	Long term	68205
Medium term	1300	Medium term	41480
Short term	10000		
Total	12700	Total	109685

Source: Vijayavani Kannada Daily newspaper, P1, 15th Nov. 2016