

*Research Paper*



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## SUICIDE OF VIDARBHIAN FARMERS - A CRITICAL STUDY

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Referred By—

### INTRODUCTION:-

Rural economy in Maharashtra still depends on agriculture and industries based on agriculture. Due to the frequent infertility, capriciousness of nature and consequent crop failure attraction for agriculture business is decreasing day by day. Frequent incidents of suicide by farmers has attracted the attention of government and thinkers. 2400 farmers committed suicide during the period of June - 2001 to 30 Oct. 2006, in Maharashtra, majority of them belonging to the Vidarbha province. According to the claims of Vidarbha movement committee, 1000 farmers committed suicide within 17 months during the period of June - 2005 to 20 Oct. 2006. In Yeotmal district 261 farmers committed suicide, 186 in Amravati, 113 in Akola, 112 in Washim 128 in Buldhana, 80 in Wardha, 32 in Nagpur, 35 in Chandrapur, 28 in Bhandara, 10 in Garhchiroli and in Gondiya district

According to the eminent sociologist Emil Durkheim mental weakness is not the only psychological factor which compels farmers to commit suicide, but the social factor is the only thing which compels them to commit suicide. On the basis of sociological theory of Durkheim government which implements agricultural policy in the country, Government machinery which fixes the agricultural production value and the planners who have been trying to develop country through the medium of plannings are responsible for the increasing incidents of suicides among farmers. The high interest rate of private money lenders is another leading factor responsible for farmers' suicide.

### SOME MAJOR REASONS BEHIND FARMERS SUICIDE:-

#### 1) LACK OF IRRIGATION FACILITY:-

Indian agriculture is mostly dependent on capriciousness of nature, it has turned out to be a kind of gambling. Though the availability of irrigation facilities had increased upto some extent in the post independence era, farming in most of the areas still depends on nature. Because our politicians have deliberately favoured imbalance in the implementation of irrigation schemes, most 15 farmers have committed suicide. The fact that 127 case of suicide took place in September 2006 proves that the special package offered by the central Government could not effectively check the tendency of among farmers to commit suicide. of the areas remained non-irrigated. Especially, West Vidarbha loe. Vidarbha (Varhad) is known as the most backlog affected province in the state. Which is clear from the following table.

Sr.No	Districts	Irrigation backlog (in crore)
01	Akola & Washim (jointly)	2499
02	Amravati	2347
03	Buldhana	2161
04	Aurangabad	1955
05	Yeotmal	1774
06	Jalana	1529
07	Dhule	1401
08	Latur	806
09	Nashik	777
10	Ratnagiri	693

After studying above table we come to know that, there are only three districts in the state having more than 2000 crores backlog, and these three districts are from the Amravati Revenue Division, still the backlog of Akola and Washim is computed jointly, and 13 talukas

are from this district have an enormous backlog of 1499 crores. Another important thing is that, this area is known as saline water Belt area. Therefore most of the land is under the SALINE WATER BELT area. As a result number of farmers' families have been living their lives in extreme poverty. Frequent crop failure and the above stated situation compel them to commit suicide. therefore, this business is not that much attractive. Near about 5862 farmers committed suicide in seven states during the period of 2002 to 2004 and this information was provided in Parliament by the government.

**STATEWISE STATISTICS OF FARMERS' SUICIDE DURING THE PERIOD OF 2002 TO 2004.**

Sr. No.	States	Number of farmers committed suicide.
01	Karnataka	3319
02	Andhrapradesh	1510
03	Maharashtra	835
04	Kerala	180
05	Gujrat	15
06	Panjab	02
07	Orisa	01

From the above statistics it comes to notice that, a large number of farmers from Maharashtra, Andhra-Pradesh and Karnataka committed suicide but in Gujarat, Punjab and Orisa the number of farmer committed suicide is less. Therefore it seems that lack of irrigation facilities that is to say the dominance of rainfed farming is mostly responsible for farmers' suicide.

**2) DEBTNESS :-** Debt of farmers have been increasing day by day, due to the capriciousness of nature, lavish expenditure on weddings, and lack of proper price for products. As a result most of farmers have to take loan from private money-lenders on high interest rate upto 2 to 10% per month by mortgaging their land. Therefore, they have to spend a large share of their income on repaying loan taken from private money-lenders. Many a time they can not release mortgage land from private money lenders, and due to this helpless situation they commit suicide.

Kind of farmers	Farmers who can afford to save	Farmers in debt	Balanced	Total
Small Farmers	07	42	05	50
Big Farmers	11	26	09	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

According to one of the surveys from Vidarbha near about 9 lac farmer families are under debt out of 17 lac farmer families from Amravati, Yeotmal, Akola, Wardha, Buldhana and Washim in Vidarbha province. According to one of my surveys the condition of farmers saving and debt is as shown below. It is clear from the above table that, farmers who can afford to save money are four times less than farmers who are in debt. It seems from the above statistics that almost 68% farmers are under debt, and only 18% farmers are capable of saving money. Debt of small land owners are about 84% whereas percentage of farmers holding more land is about 52%. Due to debt farmers have to spend large share from their income on repaying debt, as a result they can not fulfill their primary and basic needs.

**3) PLANNER'S SIGNORANCE TOWARDS FARMING :-**

Planning is an effective way to bring about economic development. India's first Prime Minister Mr. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dreamed to develop agriculture and rural area through the medium of planning, but in 21<sup>st</sup> century Pandit. Nehru's dream remains unfulfilled. In First Five Year Plan more emphasis was given on agriculture and rural development during the period of 1951 to 1956. But in later planning agriculture and rural development were neglected completely.

**PERCENTAGE RATIO OF EXPENDITURE ON AGRICULTURE AND FIVE YEAR PLAN**

Sr. No	Five Year Plans	Percentage ratio of total expenditure with agriculture expenditure
1.	I <sup>st</sup> five year plan	31.00
2	II <sup>nd</sup> five year plan	20.00
3	III <sup>rd</sup> five year plan	20.00
4	IV <sup>th</sup> five year plan	24.00
5	V <sup>th</sup> five year plan	20.00
6	VI <sup>th</sup> five year plan	13.90
7	VII <sup>th</sup> five year plan	05.00
8	VIII <sup>th</sup> five year plan	12.67
9	IX <sup>th</sup> five year plan	19.40
10	X <sup>th</sup> five year plan	03.95

It is clear from the above table that a considerable amount of money was earmarked for agriculture, but in later five year plans agriculture business was neglected and less expenditure had been earmarked on agriculture development. As a result, agriculture business was pushed to the backward, due to this, the condition of farmers deteriorating day by day. India is called as an agriculture country but actually only 10% National Annual Income is acquired from the agriculture busi-

ness. More than 65% people still depend on agriculture. Because of the contraversial policies of planners Indian farmers pulled into economic complexity.

**REMEDIES:-**

Following remedies should be implemented to change the miserable condition of farmers in India and in Vidharbha.

**REMOVING IRRIGATION BACKLOG**

Rainfed farming is done in most parts of Vidarbha . Because of lack of irrigation they have to depends on capriciousness of nature as a result many time they have to face famine. It means that lack of irrigation is the major problem of farmers. Therefore, huge backlog from Vidarbha must be removed by providing irrigation facilities to rainfed farmers by the government.

**MAKING PROVISION FOR LOAN AT LOW INTEREST RATE:-**

High interest rate of Co-operative Bank and monopoly of private money-lenders compel farmers to spend major share from their income. In this way private money lenders and bankers became rich. So farmers must be provided loan at 2% interest rate from Co-operative Bank by government. If the enough and adequate loan is provided to the farmers at low interest rate, it would help to relieve farmers from the clutches of the private money-lenders.

**PROVIDING REASONABLE PRICE FOR FARM PRODUCTS ON THE BASIS OF PRODUCTION EXPENDITURE:-**

Non-agricultural products get reasonable price on the basis of production expenditure products. Therefore government should take steps to fix reasonable price for farmers agriculture products. As well as selling and buying process of agricultural products should be done through co-oprative and sell-purchasing centres.

**STORAGE FACILITIES FOR AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS:-**

Due to the lack of storage facilities for agriculture products, farmers have to sell their products, crops to merchant at very low rate, therefore, they can not get reasonable price for their production. On the other hand the traders take advantage of this drawback on the part of the farmers and earn huge profit at the cost of the farmers. Therefore, store houses should be established at Taluka as well as rural level to put an end to the exploitation of farmers by traders. Besides, loan should be made available to the farmers at low interest rate by mortgaging the agricultural produces stored in the godowns. Thus the exploitation of farmers by traders and private money-lenders would be cheked to some extent.

**TO GIVE PREFERENCE TO ORGANIC FARMING:-** Farmers themselves have to reduce their expenditure on modern seeds, fertilizers and insecticides by giving preference to organic farming.

**RESERVATION FOR FARMERS CHILDREN IN EDUCATION :-** There should be reservation for poor farmers children in education and training as well as in service sectors.

**HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

In order to improve the health of rural people; modern hospitals, midicines and other health care facilities should be provided at rural level at lower rate.

**CONCLUSION:**

Thus poverty of Indian farmers is subject of research and deep thinking. Sincere implemintation of these welfare schemes by the government and favourable response to these governmental efforts on the part of the farmers will undoubtedly bring golden days for Indian farming .

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