Suicidal Tendencies Among Farmers of Dharwad District – A Study

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KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAD
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In
CRIMINOLOGY AND FORENSIC SCIENCE

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SUICIDAL TENDENCIES AMONG FARMERS OF DHARWAD DISTRICT – A STUDY

INTRODUCTION

India is the land of agriculture with an agriculture based economy. Most of the Indian population lives in its villages and thus the contribution of agriculture to Indian economy becomes very important. 43 per cent of India’s territory remains employed in agricultural activities. Agriculture along with other allied activities like forestry, fishing etc provides employment to 60 per cent of India’s population. Agriculture also provides for 8.56 per cent of the country’s total exports. The contribution of agriculture to Indian economy in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is declining steadily year due to the process of Industrialization and the economic growth gathered momentum in different five year plans with the manufacturing and service sectors growing rapidly and agriculture limping along, the percentage share of agriculture in GDP reached a level of 17.8 per cent in 2007-08. According to Union Finance Minister the GDP from agriculture, forestry and fishing for the year 2008-09 was 16 per cent. Despite a steady decline of its share in GDP, agriculture is still the largest economic sector and plays a significant role in the overall socio-economic development of our country. It is the main source food to the growing population of our country. Our country could achieve the self sufficiency of food grains in few decades of its political emancipation. The food production in India reached to 213 million tons in 2001-02. It was increased to 231 million tonnes in 2007-08 and there was a decrease of the same by one million tons (230 million tons) in 2008-09 due drought in some states, flood in some other states, and also due to agricultural crises.

The high rate of suicides among farmers of Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh caught the attention of politicians, policy makers and also the academicians of the country by the end of 1990. The pesticides used by farmers failed to control the pests due to adulteration which resulted in the
loss of crops. Inferior quality seeds were supplied to the farmers in some parts of the state. The
disgusted farmers committed suicide. The ‘suicidal current’ gradually spread to other states, but it is
more in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Chattisgarh states. These
states altogether have one third of the country’s population but two-thirds of farmers’ suicides. The
rate at which farmers are killing themselves in these states is far higher than suicide rates among
non-farmers (Sainath, P 2009). Close to 150,000 farmers have committed suicides in nine years
from 1997 to 2005. By 2007 the total number of suicides by farmers went up to 182,936. According
to National Crime Records Bureau on an average, one farmer committed suicide every 32 minutes
in nine years from 1997 to 2005 on all India bases.

THE THESIS INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS

CHAPTER I - Introduction

CHAPTER II – Methods and Materials

CHAPTER III - Analysis of Socio-Economic Conditions of Victims’ Family

CHAPTER IV - Strategies Adopted For Prevention of Farmers’ Suicide

CHAPTER V – Conclusion and Suggestions

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

Introduction

India is the land of agriculture and it is the main occupation for more than 70 percent of the
population of the country. The economic prosperity of India to a major extent depends on prosperity
of agriculture. It is a known fact that most of the Indian population lives in its villages and majority
of villagers are engaged in agriculture. Agriculture along with other allied activities like animal
husbandry, forestry and fisheries is a dynamic and an important component of our economy that
provides livelihood for more than 60 percent of our people.
The contribution of agriculture to Indian economy in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is declining steadily year by year due to the process of industrialization and the economic growth gathered momentum in different five year plans with the manufacturing and service sectors growing rapidly and agriculture limping along, the percentage share of agriculture in GDP reached a level of 17.8 percent in 2007-08 (Ruddar Datt and Sundaram: 2010). According to Union Finance Minister the GDP from agriculture, forestry and fishing for the year 2008-09 was 16 percent (The Hindu - Business Line, June 1, 2010). Despite a steady decline of its share in GDP, agriculture is still the largest economic sector and plays a significant role in the overall socio - economic development of our country. The most tragic part of our country is the report of more suicidal deaths among the farming community.

Origin of Research Problem:

The suicidal tendency among the farming community owes its origin from Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh and also the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra since the end of 1990. The pesticides used by farmers failed to control the pests due to adulteration which resulted in the loss of crops. In some parts, the farming communities were supplied with inferior quality of seeds. Supply of inferior quality of seeds, loss of crops and the debt brought frustration among them. The ‘suicidal current’ gradually spread to other states. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report on ‘Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India 2007’, 46 farmers commit suicide every day in India. In all as many as 16,632 farmers, including 2,369 women killed themselves in 2007 constituting. Further NCRB report on ‘Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India 2008’ points out that 1,99,132 farmers have committed suicide since 1997 to 2008.

Review of Literature:

In the recent years, many cases of farmer’s suicide have been reported in a number of states, particularly Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab and Maharashtra (Mishra, 2006).
Therefore, most of the studies in Indian context revolve around farmers’ suicide. For instance, Iyer and Manick (Iyer and Manick 2000) try to identify the socio economic profile of the suicide victims. Study also examined the economic and social factors of suicides using data from the three highly suicide prone blocks of Sangur district namely Lehragaga, Andana and Barnala and suggested for the preventive measures in the suicide prone blocks and general measures to prevent further recurrence of suicide. Mishra (2006) documents that in the state of Maharashtra, the suicide mortality rate for farmers has increased from 15 in 1995 to 57 in 2004; whereas, for the state of Punjab, examine possible linkage between institutional credit, indebtedness and farmers’ suicides. Both the studies find that indebtedness is one of the major cause of suicide among farmers but warns that it cannot be taken as the sole cause as the data showed no direct causal relationship between institutional credit, indebtedness and suicides Satish (Satish 2006).

**International Status:**

More than 73 percent of population of the developing countries in the world is poor and they reside in the rural areas. One of the estimate shows that 2.5 billion rural dwellers in the developing countries exclusively depend on agriculture for the livelihood the problems in the farm sector, in farm sector is world wide. This problem is very intense because agriculture a major occupation for more than 70 percent population in India. The suicides by farmers have caused a major concern in the countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Korea. The farmers’ suicides are higher in these countries compared to other countries of the World. The farmers’ suicides are also found in African countries like Burkina Faso, Mali etc. The subsidy to cotton sector is extended by United States and European Union is considered to be the main cause for farmers’ suicide in these countries.

**National Scenario:**

India has the total geographical area of 328.7 million hectares, of which net sown area is 141 million hectares 92.6 million hectares area is dependent on natural rainfall and the remaining is the
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**National Scenario:**

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irrigated area. This shows that the dry land area farming to the Indian farmer is inevitable. The crops that are grown in the dry land farming are Jowar, pulses, oilseeds, cotton etc. The Indian farmer is mainly dependent on timely rainfall; the rainfall in India is unpredictable. Failure of monsoon results in the failure of crops. Due to which Indian agriculture is termed as Gamble of Monsoon (Tyagi 1984).

Farmer’s indebtedness is one of the main causes of distress in the agriculture sector. Almost half (49 percent) India’s farmer households are indebted. The small and marginal farmers get the loan at a higher rate of interest from private money lenders due to non availability of institutional credit. As a result they are unable to clear of the loan of the private money lenders and enter in to vicious debt trap.

Majority of the Indian farmers are small-scale farmers who own around two acres of land. One of the recent surveys on agriculture reveals that there are 12 corer small-scale farmers in our country (S. K. Oct. 8 06). It is a difficult task for these small holders to use cost oriented modern technology in agriculture. Agricultural products in these days go to the global market, which is highly quality and price competitive since prices are determined by the market forces. To shoulder this challenge effectively, the farmer, amongst other things, has to market his produce at the right market place at the right time. This requires management, knowledge and skill to procure remunerative prices for the produces. Our farmers lack this skill because of their ignorance and illiteracy.

Failure of monsoon and failure of crops has adversely affected the farming community of the northern region of Karnataka, the Vidharbha region of Mahashtra and some districts of Andhra-Pradesh and Kerala. The small and marginal cultivators under these circumstances fail to repay the loan that they have borrowed from institutional and non-institutional sources of finance. The small –
scale cultivators in general do not and cannot save anything for future. Whatever they earn is just sufficient to meet their basic requirements of life.

A surveys conducted on all India bases reveals that there are twelve crores farmers in our country. The statistics on farmers suicide from the year 1997–2006 shows that of the total 10,95,219 suicides (NCRB 2004) in the country the suicides by farmers accounts to 1, 82,936.

Table 1. Selected State-wise Number of Suicides by Farmers in India (2000-01 to 2009-10)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Pradesh</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>1126</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2630</td>
<td>2505</td>
<td>2340</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>2355</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>5403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>1315</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>409</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2821</strong></td>
<td><strong>2837</strong></td>
<td><strong>3623</strong></td>
<td><strong>1340</strong></td>
<td><strong>2249</strong></td>
<td><strong>1696</strong></td>
<td><strong>3343</strong></td>
<td><strong>1359</strong></td>
<td><strong>1194</strong></td>
<td><strong>370</strong></td>
<td><strong>20832</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Position in Karnataka State:

Karnataka is predominantly an agricultural state, about 76 percent of the population lives in rural areas and about 56 percent of the workforce is engaged in agriculture and allied activities which generate about 49 percent of the State’s income. The state contributes about 5.59 percent in national food grains production. Karnataka is one of the states having severe agrarian distress since many years. But it had no history of farmers committing suicide when crops or market failed, although there were agitations of farmers in the past (Assadi, 1998). The first incidence of farmers’ suicide which attracted considerable attention of media and public, was reported on 12th December 1997, Mr. Shivaraj Mainalle of Siddeshwar village in Bidar District committed suicide (Veeresh Committee, 2002). Out of the last nine years, the state has experienced drought for seven years, this
is one of the major reasons for farmers taking extreme step of suicide. A large number of farmers committed suicide during the drought period from 2000-01 to 2003-04. Union Government sources (during the question hour in the Rajya Sabha) pointed out that there are 9642 suicidal deaths of farmers between 2000-2001 to 2008-2009 have been reported in Karnataka State. Honorable Minister for Agriculture while giving details in the assembly on January 11, 2011 said that 2597 cases have been reported the period from 2003-04 to 2010-11.

**Significance of the Study:**

Agriculture is the backbone of Indian economy. It has also been pointed that agriculture and allied sectors contribute nearly 17.8 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India, while about 65 to 70 percent of the population is dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. In the modern period the agriculture has become an industry on one side and on the other side it is facing problems due to lack of financial and credit support. One of the thinkers, Nath N.C. has rightly observed that “Agriculture is still the single largest livelihood system in Asia, employing nearly 60 percent of the workforce. It is not only the main source of the employment, income and food for over 70 percent of the population, but it is also the main culture for rural families”.

Unfortunately due to uncertainty of monsoon, non-availability of credit, increasing prices of seeds, pesticides and fertilizers, agriculture has become a most critical industry and farmers are suffering due to economic distress and they are committing suicide on large scale in different provinces of the country. The present research work focuses on farmers problems in Dharwad District.

**CHAPTER II – METHODS AND MATERIALS**

Need of the study, Objectives, Hypothesis and Methodology which includes the sources of data collection and the statistical tools.
Research Area:

Dharwad district is selected for the purpose of study of the research work. There are five taluks in the district which include Dharwad, Hubli, Kalaghatagi, Kundagol, and Navalgund. The Dharwad district has the total geographical area of 5,88,070 hectares of land, the district receives an annual rainfall of 717.2 mm to 972.5 mm. This district receives nearly 67 percent of rain during South West Monsoon period and remaining 23 percent of rainfall is from north east monsoon period. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in this district and the main food crops are sunflower, ragi, jowar, wheat, Cotton, maize and other cereals. Our concern in the present study is small scale farmers, marginal farmers who are facing major problems in farming. As per the Government source total 75 farmer’s suicide cases have come to light from 2003-04 to 2009-2010 in these five taluks. Taking all these 75 cases in to the scope of the research studies, each such family has been visited and studied through questioner.

Table 2. Farmer Suicides in Dharwad District 2003-2010 (March).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dharwad</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navalagund</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubli</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kundagol</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalaghatagi</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methodology

Sample Size:

The respondents in this sample mainly include the farm victim’s family members/the persons who attempted for suicide in the five taluks of Dharwad District. As per the Government
source total 75 farmer’s suicide cases was came to light from 2003-04 to 2009-2010 in these five talukas.

(a) Sampling plan:

Purposive sampling technique was used for collecting the data.

**Source of data collection:**

The data was collected from primary and secondary sources with the help of official records and also by visiting the victim’s family.

**i Primary Source:**

The methodological approach of data collection includes methodologies available in any social scientific work. The Questionnaire method, interview method, discussions with the key informant technique was held to collect the data.

(a) Structured Questionnaires

Since, majority of the respondents are illiterate a structured questionnaire was prepared to obtain the required information from the sample selected for the purpose of the study.

(b) Interviews

The information which can not be accommodated through structured questionnaire, the same was obtained through interview schedules. The respondents in the interview method were local body members of the farm victim’s family, neighborhoods, local body members, village accountants and others.
(c) Discussions

The discussions were held with the key informants mainly office bearers of Raith Samparka Kendra, Elderly persons in the village, agricultural Experts and other experts in the field and also government officials.

ii  Secondary Source:

The secondary data was obtained from National Crime Records Bureau, Karnataka State Crime Records Bureau, Dharwad District Crime Record Bureau, Government Committees, and NGO’s, through Internet, Police Department, Birth and Death Records Office and other Government offices. Latest information relating to farmers problems and also suicides has been gathered by referring to different news papers, weekly and monthly magazines. I also referred various research thesis in the Karnataka University Library, Dr.V.K.Gokak Library, University Law College Library, J.S.S. College Library, Economics Research Centre, CMDR and Agriculture University Library etc are helped me to collect information through literature. Besides this, I have read news papers, magazines and collected information which were available in the news papers and magazines related to research study.

iii.  Development of Tools:

1. Descriptive statistical tool was applied to study the concentration and variation of suicidal tendency cases.

2. Parametric and non-parametric statistical tool was used to study the significant relation between the attributes specially the health indicator, socio-economic and psychological status, habits of the person and etc.
Analysis of Data and Results:

The data was collected from all the taluks of Dharwad District regarding the farmer's suicide. Farmers attempting to suicide was analyzed and interpreted by using the statistical tools as mentioned in the methodology. For presentation of data different diagrams, graphs and percentage analysis was used.

Objectives:

The study of suicidal tendencies among the farmers of Dharwad district is undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To study the social, economical and educational status of the suicidal victims.
2. To study the adverse agriculture related factors for suicidal tendencies.
3. To study the community intervention in solving the agriculture related problems of the suicidal victims' families.
4. To study the impact governmental and non-governmental organizations in reducing suicide among farmers.

Hypothesis:

1. Adverse agricultural factors resulting in the miserable socio-economic conditions are responsible for suicidal tendencies among farmers.
2. The assistance given by governmental and the non-governmental organizations are inadequate in mitigating the suicidal tendencies among farmers.

CHAPTER III - ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF VICTIMS' FAMILY

In the third chapter an in-depth analysis of the socio-economic and demographic profile of the sample households has given a chance to identify the socio-economic factors that are forcing the distressed farmers' for committing suicide. Some the analysis indicates that as follows.
• Makes it clear that more number of male farmers (73 cases) have committed suicide.

• The total analysis of all the 75 farm suicide cases makes it clear that the highest numbers of suicide cases are in between the age group of 48-57.

• Of the 75 farm suicide cases 39 (52%) farmers were belonging to Lingayat Community, 17 farm suicides were reported from Kuruba Community. Both communities are the dominant communities in Dharwad district.

• Maximum numbers of farmers, who have committed suicide, was married (49 cases).

• The study of all 75 farm suicide cases tells that 57.33 (43 cases) percent of the farmers were illiterate.

• 46.67 (35 cases) percent farm suicide cases make in the Small scale farmers have not knowledge of the modern agriculture technology and new methods of growing crops. They have practiced old agriculture methods.

• Out of the 75 farm suicides, 39 (52 %) farmers died due to insecticide poisoning.

• Incidentally, there are 33 cases where the victims are under 48-57 years in age.

• 69.34 percent (52 cases) of farm suicides in nuclear families.

• Of the 75 farm suicides in the district more cases of farm suicides 43 (57.34 %) have been reported of the farmers who are completely dependent on natural rainfall for cultivation.

• More number of dependents is found in the small scale category (Average 4.9) and large category (Average 4.5).

• Of the causes listed for farm suicides the available records and the details members of the victim’s family point out that in 32 % cases failure to meet the financial commitment of the family is the main cause for suicides.

• The low annual income has caused more distress among farmers are the resultant factors for farmers distress. They are unable to meet out the family demands and social commitments.
• Looking to the different categories of farm holders more number of the small scale (25.63 %) and large- scale farmers (33.13 %) were having irrigation facilities to their lands.

• The victims use to grow 14 categories crops in the rain fed area. Jowar, wheat, groundnut are the common form of food items grown by all the categories of farmers. The Commercial and cash crops are grown by medium–scale farmers and large- scale farmers.

• The victims use to grow main crops in the irrigated land are Groundnut, Maize, Wheat, Cotton, Sunflower, Onion and Sugarcane are the crops grown by all the categories of farmers except marginal- scale farmers. Majority of the irrigated crops are the cash crops.

• Agriculture has become a costly affair in these days due to the use of hybrid variety of seeds, use of fertilizers and insecticides and also costly labour. The cost of cultivation depends on the kind of crops one wants to grow. There is no considerable difference in the cost of cultivation from one category of farm holding to another category of farm holding as the farmers are classified on the bases of their land holdings.

• The marginal and semi-medium scale farmer’s families get more yields per acre comparing to large-scale farmers.

• More farmers belonging to marginal–scale and semi-medium–scale category had availed loan both from institutional and non–institutional sources. However, majority of farmers in both categories had taken loan from institutional sources.

• . Out of the 75 cases, majority of respondents (26.52 %) opined that failure of the crops is the main reason for suicides.
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CHAPTER IV - STRATEGIES ADOPTED FOR PREVENTION OF FARMERS’ SUICIDE

Introduction:

The crises in the Indian agriculture sector cropped up as a result privatization; liberalization and globalization during nineties that have brought changes in the agriculture sector. The small farmers in India are the major farming community and the largest farming community in the world was adversely affected due to these changes. This community is on the verge of extinction due to the conditions imposed by WTO. The World Bank’s structural adjustment policies forced India to open up its seed sector to global corporations in 1998. Farm saved seeds were replaced by corporate seeds which needed fertilizers and pesticides. Agriculture became a costly affair. The Indian small farmers have failed to adjust with these changes. Managing finance for the agricultural work became a difficult task. Understanding the problems that have cropped up in farming some small farmers gave up farming and shifted other occupations. The farmers who failed to cope up to the changes were driven to suicide in the depressed state.

The Government of India and also various State Governments have taken measures to instill the confidence among the farming community and encourage farming. Various Commissions and committees have been appointed to study and suggest measures to resolve the crises in this sector. The Government of India has set up the National Commission on Farmers in February 2004 under the Chairmanship of well-known agricultural scientist Dr. M. S. Swaminathan. The Commission started its work with a declaration that “Serving Farmers and Saving Farming”. The National Commission for Farmers is formed with the objective to prepare the road map for sustainable development of agriculture and optimizing its contribution to growth and development of economy, particularly improving the income and standard of living of farmers.
**Governmental Measures:**

To prevent the incidents of suicide among farming community and to instill confidence in them the Government of India and the Government of Karnataka have taken various measures by announcing packages to the farming community. The Government of India has released rehabilitation package of Rs 19,163.91 crore since 2006 covering 31 districts in four states—Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra, to address the problem of agrarian distress. The period for implementation of non-credit components of package was subsequently extended by two more years till September 2011.

The Government of Karnataka initially paid the compensation of rupees one lakh to the families of the victims. The suicides by farming community went on increasing without any check. Later, it was felt by governmental machinery that the payment of compensation could be one of the reasons for the acts of self-destruction. Further, it was also noticed in some cases suicides due personal reasons were equated with the suicides due to failure of crops to get compensation from the state.

**The Relief Measures Available To Farmers:**

A number of relief measures are already available in the schemes sponsored both by the Government of India and the State Governments. They include the Calamity Relief Fund, National Family Benefit Scheme, Raitha Sanjeevani Scheme, Pledge Loan Scheme, Rashtricaya Krishi Bhima Yojana, Minimum Support Price and ‘Sankata Harana’ Scheme implemented by the IFFCO.

The measures taken by the Government of Karnataka include seeds and other agricultural products at subsidized rates to small and marginal farmers, training of new agricultural technology, encouraging organic farming, disbursing crop loan at 3% in commercial banks. And profitable scheme aimed at increasing agricultural productivity (Anonymous 2011).
Karnataka Agriculture Budget 2011:

Karnataka State is the first state in the country to have an ‘Agriculture Budget’ in the country. The highlights of the budget are

- Providing of crop loans at 1 per cent interest rate and earmarked Rs 17,857 crore for agriculture, allied and irrigation sector development.
- The rate of interest on crop loans of up to Rs 3 lakh from cooperative institutions would be reduced from 3 per cent to 1 per cent.
- An amount of Rs 1000 is provided for development of 10 lakh farmer’s families under the ‘Suvarna Bhoomi Yojana’ scheme.
- Rs 200 crore is reserved for encouraging organic farming.
- To facilitate the educational facilities funds are allocated in the higher education to provide interest free loan for the higher education farmers children.

Some the Analysis Indicates that as Follows:

- Dharwad district has recorded 75 cases of farm suicides from 2003 - 2010. After thorough enquiry on the bases of committee report compensation is paid in 21 cases. Compensation has not been recommended in 54 cases. 21 farmer families have received one lakh Rs (1lakh) compensation.
- One of the reasons could be the loss crop due to draught/unprecedented rainfall. The other reasons could be return of debt. Being unable to bear the mental depression the farmers surrender to suicide. Of the 75 cases of farmers’ suicides in Dharwad District crop insurance is paid in 15 cases, the crop insurance was denied in 60 cases.
- Of the 75 farmers who have committed suicides 19 of the victims had taken crop loans with different financial institutions and 56 farmers had not availed any crop loan.
Non-Governmental Measures:

India grapples with infectious diseases, malnutrition, infant and maternal mortality and other major health problems and hence, suicide is accorded low priority in the competition for meager resources. The mental health services are inadequate for the needs of the country. For a population of over a billion, there are only about 3,500 psychiatrists. Rapid urbanization, industrialization and emerging family systems are resulting in social upheaval and distress. The diminishing traditional support systems leave people vulnerable to suicidal behavior. Hence, there is an emerging need for external emotional support. The enormity of the problem combined with the paucity of mental health service has led to the emergence of NGOs in the field of suicide prevention.

1. The National Human Rights Commission in its 2004-05 Annual Report on the suicide by the farmers in Karnataka under Case File No. 180/10/2003-2004(FC)(LF No.213/10/2003-2004) on the bases of complaints by some representatives of the people the Commission considered the matter and got it investigated by its Special Rapporteur. The Special Rapporteur, NHRC visited the affected areas and submitted a detailed report dated 10/01/2004 with the following broad recommendation:

(a) In all cases of Suicide deaths, the debts incurred with public institutions like cooperatives and banks should be ordered to be cancelled, after a through verification;

(b) Payment of ex-gratia relief of Rs 2 lakhs to the affected families. In addition, depending on the debts incurred by the victim, a further amount not exceeding Rs 1 lakh to be provided to each family towards settlement of the debts with the assistance of the village community, so as to end the entire trauma being experienced by these families.
(c) A complete scrutiny of the functioning of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in Karnataka by the Development Officer including the implementation of PDS at district and village level;

(d) A credible rural employment programme based on productive public works with a guarantee of at least 100 to 120 days of employment with guaranteed minimum wages;

(e) The programme of providing 5kg. of rice as “take home” ration should be restarted by the Karnataka Government and nutrition programmes must also be strengthened (Anonymous 2005)

2 M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) an NGO established in the year 1988 under the chairmanship of Dr. M. S. Swaminathan himself in consequent to the advice of the Nobel Laureate late Dr. C. V. Raman. The research foundation was established with the objectives to work on ‘the coastal Systems Research’, ‘Biodiversity and Biotechnology’, ‘Ecotechnology and Food security’, ‘Gender and Development, and Informatics. The MSSRF initiated some programmes in May 2006 to help alleviate the farmers’ families in distress in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra State for Educational Support of Children and Livelihood and Rehabilitation of widows (http://www.mssrf.org).

3 The ‘Karnataka Rajya Raith Sangha’ a state level Association of farmers mainly attends to the problems and rights of the farmers. The Raitha Rangha has its branches in all the villages.

4 The ‘Yuvak Sanghas’ (Youth Clubs) in the villages attend to the problems of the farmers along the ‘Raitha Sangha’.

5 Apart from the above organizations some more nongovernmental organizations like ‘Samajik Parivartana Samudaya’ ‘Vigil India Movement’, ‘Samaj Parivartan Janandolana’
Mata Amritmayi Trust' and other organizations in one way or the other are working for cause of the farming community.

**Impact of Governmental and Non Governmental Measures:**

The Government of India and the Government of Karnataka have announced packages from time to time to mitigate the sufferings of farmers. The state wise statistics of the suicides has been given in table 1.1 from the year 2000-01 to 2009-10. The available data points out that there is a declining trend of farmers' suicides in Karnataka from the years 2001-02 to 2009-10, still then measures taken by the governments have not totally stopped the suicides among the farmers in Karnataka. Similarly, in Dharwad district by and large the rate of suicides by farmers from 2003-04 to 2009-10 shows the declining trend, but the measures the union and the State Governments and the NGO's have taken have failed to stop the suicide among farmers. It is surprised to see that despite the measures by the Government suicide among farmers of Dharwad district has gone up in 2007-08 the comparing to immediate two previous years.

**Relief Measures by the Community:**

After the death of the bread earner members of the family become victims. They need support in every respect. In such a situation the local leaders, the Yuvaka Sanghas, the Raita Sangha, elderly persons of the locality and local Panchayat members come to the rescue of family members of the victims to carry out the immediate tasks. As the victims family is mainly dependent on agriculture the local community leaders help in the purchase of different requirement to the victim's family.

- In the small scale category 2 families out of 35 farm victims' families are the beneficiaries due to community intervention. In the semi-medium category only one family availed the help rendered by the community. In the medium – scale farmers’ family also only one family of farm victim is the beneficiary of the help rendered by community. None of the
families in the large-scale farm victims’ family are the beneficiaries due to community intervention.

- In the small-scale-farmers’ category the water sharing problem is attended in 2 families of the farm victims out of 35 families of the farm victims. In the semi-medium-farmers’ category out of the 20 farm victims’ families’ only two families have availed the help rendered by the community. In the medium scale of farmers’ two families of farm victim are the beneficiaries of community intervention out of the 6 families in the category. None of the members’ victims’ family of large scale farmers have taken the help of the community.

CHAPTER V – CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion:

The farm sector in India is in crises and it is reflected through the growing number of suicides by farmers in some states. Karnataka State is one of the states hit by the epidemic of suicide among farming community. India experienced first incident of farmers’ suicide in 1997 and according to the National Crimes Records Bureau Report since then nearly 2 lakh farmers have committed suicides. In Karnataka alone more than 30,000 farmers have committed suicides. As a result, agriculture sector is facing new challenges. These challenges are the outcome of globalization and privatization. Indian agriculture to a major extent depends on natural rainfall, which is often a failure. Drought is a common phenomenon. Karnataka State is often hit by drought conditions. There is depletion of ground water, indebtedness by farmers is growing, and youngsters do not take up to agriculture looking to the present fate of farmers. As a result there is distress in agriculture sector. The packages announced by the Union and the State governments and the measures taken by the NGO’s have brought down the rate of suicide, but have failed to completely mitigate the suffering of the farmers and commission of suicide by farmers still is continued.
Any human being takes the drastic step of committing suicide when he/she feels hopeless about the situation and does not see any solution for the problem being faced. The suicide among farmers of Dharwad District is studied in relation to their socio-economic status. The Dharwad District is often affected by the drought condition and other calamities. The joint family tradition breaking and majority of the victims had a nucleus family. This has reduced the moral and physical support that they derived in the joint family system. The study revealed that the farmers in the age group 47–58 are more vulnerable to suicides comparing to the suicides among other age groups of farmers. The study further revealed that of the 75 farm suicide cases farmers belonging to the small scale and semi – medium categories are more affected and more number of suicides has been reported in these categories. Proper mechanism has to be devised to see that the facilities of the State and the Union Government reach the concerned farmers. Education is an important tool for moulding the personality of an individual. The study revealed that majority of the farm victims are illiterates. The innocence of the farmers is misused by the money lenders who exploit them by lending more loans and making them to fall in the debt trap of the money lenders. The low annual income has caused more distress and has resulted farmers’ commits suicide. They are unable to meet the family demands and social commitments.

Suggestions:

- The cooperative farming should be encouraged to derive benefits of large scale cultivation.
- The existing cooperative societies should be strengthened exclusively in the interest of the farmers and agriculture.
- Measures should be taken for the establishment of Seeds Bank in each of the villages.
- The farmers should be motivated to grow the crops which suit with agro-climatic conditions and they should be properly educated and encouraged in organic farming.
• The farmers should be properly educated about the methods of using manure, fertilizers, pesticides and suitable crop pattern through the proper media.

• The Farmers Counseling Centers (FCC) should be established at the village Panchayat level.

• To maintain sustainable development, sufficient supply of power and water should be made available for the agricultural work.

• Crop insurance scheme should be effectively implemented.

• The Agricultural Assistants working in the villages’ should be properly trained about the advanced agricultural techniques.

• The farmers who have crossed the age of 60 years to be declared as ‘Senior Farmer’ and provide them with concessions as given to ‘senior citizens’.

• The NGOs and local SHGs should be encouraged to act as pressure groups to regulate private moneylenders.

Let us all make efforts to develop confidence among farmers and try to bring smile on their face.

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