

**University Grants Commission  
(W.R.O) Pune**

**SUMMARY**

**- Minor Research Project -**

**\* Subject \***

**Socio And Economic Study and critical analysis of  
the Causes and Factors Leading to the Suicides of  
Farmers in Amravati District**

**Name of Teacher – Kumar Bobade.**

**File NO. 23 – 007/6 (WRO) Dated 03/02/07.**

**Amount Sanction Rs. 35000/-**

**Shri Shivaji College, Amravati.**

# **MINOR REASERCH PROJECT**

## **Summary**

### **“Socio And Economic Study and Critical analysis of the Causes and Factors Leading to the Suicides of Farmers in Amravati District”**

#### **Chapter I - Introduction**

India is agriculture based country. Near about 80% population means more than 2/3 nation belongs to villages. Agriculture and agriculture based industries are only meant for bread and butter for these people.

It is a well-known fact that agriculture is the backbone of economy of this country. Father of nation's Mahatma Gandhi was well familiar with this fact and that is why agriculture and related industries were emphasized by him.

The Government since independence has given the importance to the agriculture and agriculture based industries and various agriculture development schemes have been launched. In five year development plan Agriculture is the prominent factor.

Green revolution was planned and succeeded to develop agriculture and self-independence in food grains to make it prosper and self-independent.

It was the beginning for adopting new technologies, new methods and inventions in agriculture. Agriculture universities were established. But it is a question that did they fulfill the needs and useful betterment of farmers? Can we say that the farmers in this country are self-developed, mentally capable and economically stabled? Overall answer is Negative.

Why the farmers are not capable and self- dependent? In most part of the country, farmers are fully dependent on nature. In many states they are not provided

with proper irrigation facilities. Depending upon weather and season, they yield 'Kharip' and 'Rabbi' crops. Nature is always unstable. Sometimes all the crops ruin due to heavy rain or sometimes it does not rain sufficiently. But still having no other way, farmers are still working traditionally.

Due to poor economical condition, a very few farmers can use the advanced technology in agriculture. Due to green revolution, different types of hybrid seeds are produced in a bulk, chemical fertilizers and pesticides etc. are being produced. At the beginning it seems to gain more yield but after some years, due to overuse of fertilizers and chemicals, yielding capacity of land decrease to the great extent. Ultimately this results decrease yield. Dependent upon nature and unawareness of new technologies is one of the reasons for insufficiency of the farmers. Other great reasons are family backgrounds, economical stress and responsibilities, loopholes in government plans and communication gap between scientists and farmers. This situation is prevailing all-over the India, maximum farmers are sailing the same boat.

### **Agriculture and Farmers in Maharashtra-**

There is 100 crores of population in Maharashtra. Near about 56 crores people live in villages. Out of 30,758 thousands hectare area about 22,256 thousand hectares area is under agriculture and it is the main business in Maharashtra. Due to lack of sufficient irrigation facilities in Maharashtra, agriculture still depends upon irregular monsoon. During last decade irregular monsoon has affected very badly on agriculture and farmers are suffering very badly. Percentage of crop yield is decreasing day by day and affecting on economical condition of farmers.

Due to insufficient income, farmers cannot repay the loan of Banks or money lenders. Even farmers are unable to sow the seeds in next year due to non- yielding and drought etc. Not only this, government policies are also barriers in the progress of farmers. The Government of Maharashtra is running cotton monopoly scheme. But years together government is not paying the money of cotton that purchased from farmers. This serious bad situation not only affects on economical condition of farmers but also on his mental health. This resulted in suicide of the farmers from last many years. Suicide

cases of farmers are increasing from last many years. From January 2001- July 2005 near about 300 cases of suicide of farmers are reported. In Amravati district where cotton is the main crop, percentage of suicide is more than other districts.

### **Farmers on Amravati Districts-**

Amravati district is having population of 26 lakhs, out of these 17 lakhs people live in rural area. Percentage of rural population comes about 65.49%. Geological area of Amravati district is 1221 thousand hectares. Out of this, about 790 thousand hectares area is under agriculture. It is main business of Amravati district. Near about 75% of workers work in Agriculture based industries.

Out of 7 lakhs 90 thousand hectares agriculture land only 52,355 hectare land is under irrigation. Out of which 49,896 hectare land depends on well irrigation and only 2849 hectare land irrigation on irrigation projects.

Orange farming is the main business of Warud and Morshi taluka. All farms depend upon well irrigation. From last decades due to lack of sufficient monsoon, the water level is going tremendously down that's why now they cannot pump any more water and irrigate orange farms. So the area under orange farms or fruit farms is decreasing day by day. A California of Vidarbha is now converting into desert.

Regarding irregular monsoon the condition is same in the whole district. Amravati district is badly affected form non-yielding from last decade. Cotton, which is cash of crop of the district also affecting day by day.

### **Geographical Information of Amravati district –**

Amravati district is situated in eastern geographical region of Maharashtra known as Vidharbha. Historically, this area was known as Central Provinces & Berar. Amravati is a divisional headquarters of one of the six Revenue Divisions of the State. The geographical area of the district is 12,212 Sq. KMs. The area under forest is 3,502 Sq KMs (29.27%). The major river named Wardha separates Amravati from Wardha

District. The other significant rivers flowing in the district are Purna, Tapi, Chandrabhaga, and Bembla. The average rainfall in this district is 812.8 mm. The summer season goes very hot where temperature reaches up to 47°C. Winter is the pleasant season and temperature ranges around 18 to 20°C. The National Highway No. 6 (Calcutta - Dhulia) passes through Amravati city.

From the geographical point of view, Amravati district can be divided into two main regions Melghat hills and the plains. The prominent hill range in the district is the Gawilgad hills which are located in the north-west of the district in Melghat and Chikhaldara tahsils. The crests of the range attain an average elevation of about 1000 meters, the highest point being Vairat at a height of 1,177.75 meters. This is a well forested region and has steep slopes. The only other range in the district is a low time of trap hills, lateralized to some extent, rising in the vicinity of Amravati town extending eastwards for some distance beyond Chandur railway. The plains may be further divided into following river basins; The Wardha River forms the eastern boundary of the district. The eastern portion of the district lies within its watershed. The Purna River drains the southwestern portion of the district. The northwest is drained by the Tapi River.

Amravati district is rich with fertile black cotton and alluvial soil. The richest tracks are found in valleys of rivers Purna, Wan and Wardha. The soil of the district is deep brown to brick red and black cotton soil. The soil is rich black in Chandurbazar, Morshi, Warud, Achalpur, Daryapur and Anjangaon Tahsils. The pediment belt of light and medium black soils with pebble/boulder zone, with abundant ground water supplies, sloping away from Satpuda range. The region of deep & fertile soils of the South West where the sub-soil water is very often saline. The region of light red & medium black soils is at of Eastern Amravati and Chandur Rly. Patches of fertile black soil adjoin to Morshi and Warud area. Amravati is the main growing region for the Ellachipur Sanman Chili pepper.

Amravati district is largely an agrarian economy with cotton, soyabin, redgram as major crops. It is one of the major orange producing districts with large number of orchards. Achalpur, Chandur Bazar, Morshi, Warud are the main orange producing Talukas. Other crops grown in the district are Jowar, Rice, Wheat, Gram and Sunflower.

Per Capita Income is Rs. 71,732 compared to State average of Rs. 1,03,991 per annum.

Amravati is a large center for cotton trade where cotton is assembled from the adjoining districts as well. The cotton is sent to places all over the country and mainly to the textile centers of Bombay, Solapur, Madras and Ahmedabad. The percentage of the forest area to total area in the district is 30.43%, and is unevenly distributed. Amravati has the distinction of having one third of its geographical areas under forest cover amounting to about 3.96 lakh hectare area. Apart from the agricultural products, the district is famous for its orange fruit plantations. There is great demand for oranges from the district of Maharashtra as well as from outside the state. The district is endowed with a rich variety

### **Agriculture Produce in Amravati district –**

Water is one of the main resources essential for the overall socioeconomic development of any region. With the above exceptions the district is an undulating plain of black soil of a fertile type, its richest tracts being perhaps in the neighborhood of the Wardha and the Purna rivers. It is watered by a number of streams which rise in the Satpudas in the north. The Wardha River forms the eastern boundary of the district and the eastern portion of the district for about 80 Kms lies within its watershed. The Purna River drains the southwestern portion of the district, while the northwest is drained by the Tapti River.

### **Cropping pattern –**

Most of the cultivated area of the district is under Cotton, Orange and Oil Seeds. Cotton is grown extensively in the district mainly in Achalpur, Amravati, Anjangaon, Daryapur Tiosa, and Warud tahsils. Amravati district cotton market is supposed to be the biggest cotton market in Asia. It exports cotton in both raw and processed form. The other chief exports of the district are cotton bales, wooden furniture, chilli, silk, tur-dal, food-grains, jowar, edible oils and kumkum. In addition, timber from Paratwada depot is

sent all over the country. Most of the goods are exported to Bombay, Pune and Madras as per census 1991.

## **Chapter II: Research Methodology**

The present research study was carried out with an exploratory design of social research in Amravati district of Maharashtra. Researcher had selected 60 victims by proportionate method of random sampling and data was collected from victim's households by conducting detail interview. Interview was conducted at residence of respondent so as to review overall situation of the family by researcher. In addition to personal interview, time line study for historical perspectives, observations, discussions with family members and discussions with Police Patil, Sarpanch, local leaders, other farmers of that village and Tahsildar, Taluka agriculture officer etc. reviewing victims' actual records of institutional debts etc. were some important methods used for data collection.

Findings of the study revealed that the economic consequences of suicides are fatal for the family of the incumbent – includes loss of income, asset depletion and deterioration of human capital among others. The above mentioned consequences faced by the family members need to be taken into consideration by various government and non-government organizations and social workers for planning various measures for survival, rehabilitation and future of the victims' families. Majority of the victims' family members suggested for remunerative prices to their farm produce and provision/ creation of irrigation facilities for their farming as the important measures to be taken to prevent the recurrence of suicide tragedies. All these suggestions should also be considered by the policy makers to prevent the suicidal tendency by farmers in distress prone of Amravati and Vidarbha.

## **Chapter III - The state and central government relief packages in Vidarbha:**

To control the suicide of farmers state and central government declare the relief packages for 2007 to 2009. But government plan long term methods like irrigation projects and this why government failed to control the suicide of farmers. According to record and reports of Newspaper there was a big increase in farmers suicide at the time of implementation of Packages period.

### **Failure of the state and central government relief packages in Vidarbha-**

In April 2007, an NGO named Green Earth Social Development Consulting brought out a report after doing an audit of the state and central government relief packages in Vidarbha.

The report's conclusions were:

- Farmers' demands were not taken into count while preparing the relief package. Neither were civil society organizations, local government bodies, panchayats, etc. consulted.
- The relief packages were mostly amalgamations of exiting schemes. Apart from the farmer helpline and the direct financial assistance, there was scarcely anything new being offered. Pumping extra funds into additional schemes shows that no new idea was applied to solve a situation where existing measures have obviously failed.
- The farmer helpline did not give any substantial help to farmers.
- The basis for selection of beneficiaries under the assistance scheme was not well defined. Also, type of assistance to be given led to problems like a farmer needing a pair of bullocks getting a pump set and vice versa (or a farmer

Awareness regarding the package was also pretty low. The report concluded quite alarmingly that the loan burden of the farmers will double in 2008.



## **Chapter IV - Causes and factors of farmers suicide:**

The suicide of farmers is increasing day by day in Amravati district. During January 2001 to December 2008 one thousand and six suicide of farmers are reported, out of which only 344 found eligible for help by government machinery. Suicide of farmers has been a major difficult problem and savoir concerned. There are many dimensions and factors to this problem.

### **Important contributing factors for farmer's suicide:**

In the discussion with villagers and the officials, researcher found some of the important contributing factors for farmers' suicide in Amravati district. These factors are as follows

-

- Absence of adequate social support infrastructure at the level of the village and district,
- Uncertainty of agricultural enterprise in the region,
- Indebtedness of farmers,
- Rising costs of cultivation,
- Plummeting prices of farm commodities,
- Lack of credit availability for small farmers,
- Relative absence of irrigation facilities,
- Repeated crop failures,
- Dependence on rainfall for farming,
- Rural living and easy access to poisons, and
- Lack of political will and insight in the region.

With the cumulative effect of these reasons coupled with environmental antagonism and exploitation of the farmers in all sectors made them pessimistic toward life resulting into development of suicidal tendency in them. The remedial measures undertaken by the government did not show any immediate positive effect in the attitude of the farmers

## **Chapter V – Finding and suggestions:**

### **Findings :**

The findings of this research are as follows –

1. Majority of farmers are depend upon nature. Due to uncertainty of rain farmers are unable to produce sufficient crops.
2. Mostly background of the farmers are very common and they are depend on only agriculture.
3. Due to geological aspects farmers cannot change the pattern of crops and cultivation.
4. Small and medium farmers can not afford costely machinery and costly system of modern agriculture.
5. There are lacunas in government policies about farmers and failed to uplift the farmers.Cotton monopoly scheme and packages of government are failure.
6. Banking policies are not in favour of farmers and that's why farmers are till depend on private moneylenders.Government is not takeing serious action against private moneylending.
7. Natural calamities,attitudes of Governments, exploitation by money lenders and family responsibilities makes farmer psychologically handicapped.

### **Suggestions:**

- 1) It is a complex task and requires more than just throwing money at it. Surely, other measures will be needed to set the rural economy on track.
- 2) Marketing and storage infrastructure will have to be built. New crop patterns that answer to emerging needs will have to be introduced. Better rural credit delivery system will have to be evolved.
- 3) Self-help groups need to be encouraged. Also government can introduce small and cottage industries and processing unit on agriculture product should be open in rural areas.

4) Participants suggested solutions such as self-reliance and capacity building among farmers, a monitoring and support system for vulnerable farmers, support and counseling services, a village-level, transparent system for the disbursement of relief packages.

5) Farmers perceived debt, addiction, environmental problems, poor prices for farm produce, stress and family responsibilities, government apathy, poor irrigation, increased cost of cultivation, private money lenders, use of chemical fertilizers and crop failure as the reasons for farmers' suicides.

### **Conclusion and Contribution to the Society:**

Farmers are in severe distress and there is an urgent need for increased public awareness among farmers regarding agricultural policies both financial and those extended by the government. If given an option, majority of the farmers said that they would like to quit agriculture and take up some other carrier. Farmers suicides in Amravati district are caused by the complex interplay of social, political and environmental constraints. Hence, a comprehensive intervention to ensure self reliance and capacity building among farmers in modern farming techniques, monitoring and support system for vulnerable farmers, a village-level, transparent system for disbursement of relief packages is required to prevent farmer suicides in the near future. Apart from this, there is a need to strengthen the National Mental Health Program at primary health care level to offer support and counseling to vulnerable farmers in rural area.

Finally, suicide should not be viewed as only mental health problem, which is a common notion among people. The various factors which are responsible for suicides are chronic indebtedness and inability to pay interest accumulated over the years, Economic decline leads to complications and family disputes, depression, and alcoholism, etc. Compensation following suicide (death) helps family to repay debt,

Grain drain, and the rising costs of agricultural inputs and falling prices of agricultural produce.

( Kumar Bobade )

**Principal Investigator**

( Dr. Smita Deshmukh )

**Principal**