



## FARMER'S SUICIDE: FAMILY SCENARIO AFTER THREE YEARS

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### ABSTRACT

Maharashtra has been facing draught situation since 2014. Beed district had registered highest number of farmer's suicides in 2014 in Maharashtra. On that background a study was taken on the subject of farmer's suicide and their effect on family in one particular block of district beed where highest suicides were registered during 2014. The present study is based on the evaluation of the situation aftermath of three years. The present paper tries to evaluate the status of family, and try to focus on coping patterns to the situation after the death of bread earner. This paper also goes on referring the services and the programmes rendered for these families by government and what extend it helped to sustain the life. Gender is the prominent component in the society which is quite vulnerable in the agrarian society. After three years what change occurred is also tried to understand. The findings of the study lead us to the conclusion that besides the government efforts no change has been noticed at the women's part.

**KEYWORDS:** farmer's suicides, suicidal death, economic condition, income generation

### INTRODUCTION

All eight district of Marathwada a face drought situation. After every three year, the drought situation crises. Though since 2014 continuous draught situation irrected many

problems in agro economy. This table shows how rain fed situation took on more suicidal death of farmers in last three years.

Year	No. of Suicides	Year	No. of Suicides
2002	07	2014	454
2003	14	2015	1024
2004	92	2017	907
2006	379	2018	987

A detailed study was carried out on farmer's suicide – an agricultural crisis in 2014 in Beed district. Beed district had largest suicidal deaths of farmers in Maharashtra during the year 2014-2015. Gevrai block itself had highest number of

suicides that is 44 in 48 total. It raised the brow because this block is still considered as the most influential block in the district. The portfolio of the block marks the socio economic condition as well as the agri based income generation activity.

### Agriculture growth rate in last five years

Year	Percentage
2013-14	12.3
2014-15	-10.7
2015-16	-3.2
2016-17	22.5
2017-18	-8.3

Agri based GDP of India

Source NSSO-2018

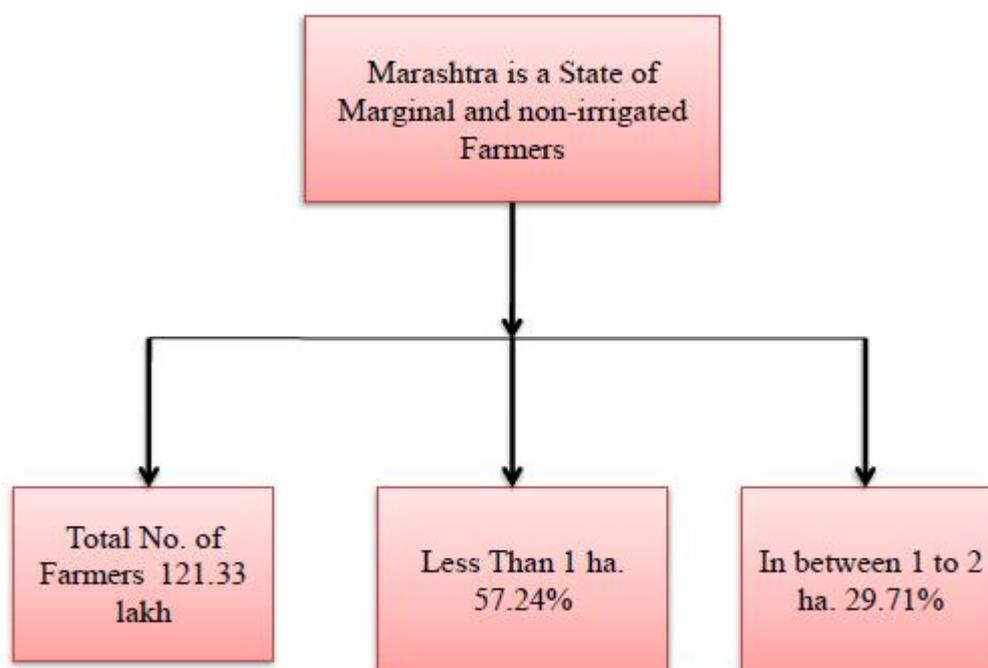
### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In his book 'Everybody loves a good draught' that is published in 1996, he explores that a "a great deal of draught 'relief' goes into contracts handed over to private parties. These to lay roads, dig wells send out water tankers etc. Further P. sainath comments that the relief programme of

government is legal but tragedy is that it rarely addresses the real problems of draught and water scarcity in his study Mr. Sainath mentioned that in around 1995 government had declared drought prone area project (DPAP) block where rain fall would receive higher in Maharashtra. Hundreds of crores spent in Maharashtra on relief and on irrigation over the years

had not seen any appreciable rise in land under irrigation. Thus the government has a quite good experience of draught and agricultural crisis since the 1950, then question lies why it could not make over the agricultural crisis over the years...! The depiction of situation in 1994 in the book of P. Sainath has not improved much,<sup>1</sup>

The drought situation directly affects the agriculture and agriculture sector provides wages to more than 60 percent of population in India. Thus it neutralize the economic condition of people are dependant for daily wages on agriculture sector. As we look into the statistical data of agrarian community of Maharashtra



90 percent of marginal farmers go for daily wages besides the farming. They are able to take only one crop in the Kharip season. The unavailability of water and capital for processing Rabbi crop. They is no proper to substitute to them to engage in the other sector.

The recent tragedy of farmers, who succumbed due to poisonous chemical spraying on crops at Yawatmal district of Maharashtra, raised many questions associated to the life of farmers. How farmers has been manipulated, misused, mislead by government agencies as well as commercial companies & traders. Farmer's community is being considered as if he is of no use any more so any chemical fertilizer company take disadvantage of their ignorance and poverty sticking position. These companies with little sensor efforts to understand the contaminated effect use of poisons chemicals in agriculture. There is no such agricultural policy on the use of chemical pesticides insecticide and fertilizers. It is just like an advertise of cigarette on which a caption. Cigarette in injurious to health is wealth on in such small letters that no one can easily read or notice. Ironically government recognizes and permission to these dangerous chemicals in one hand and prescribe organic chemicals with lack of creating awareness and focus on it. Even farmers are not ready to trust government information system that hardly set an example to replace chemical use of fertilizers.

Under the insecticide Act 1968 officials are required to train the farmers in the use of pesticides. It is observed in the Yawatmal Tragedy that the intensive spraying lasted from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 3-4 September. The graph of farmers and laborers dying or being hospitalized rose correspondingly. At the GMC of Yawatmal there were 24 admissions in July 17, 114 in August and 231 in September. Over 450 flooded to rural hospitals.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

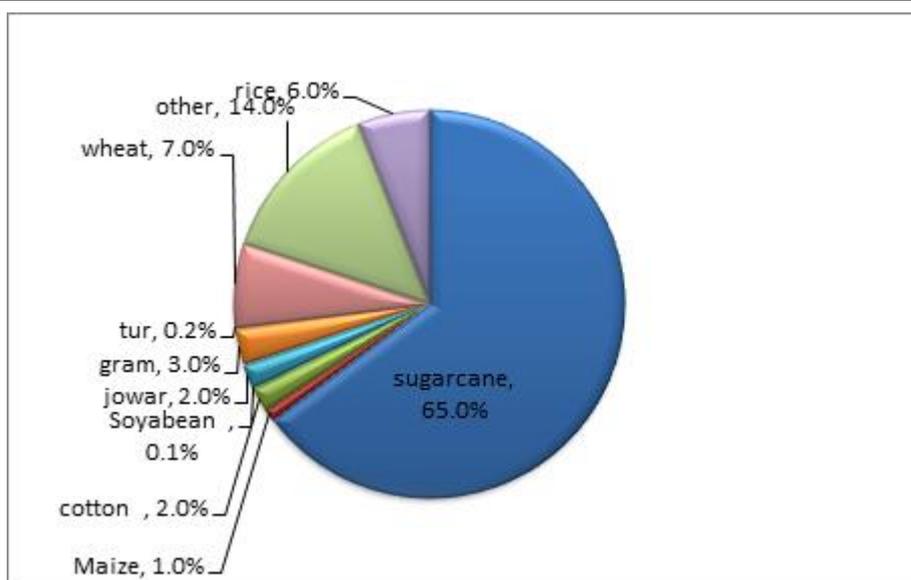
The study aims understand the perspectives of change during three years 2014 to 2017 in the agriculture situation. It also endeavors to focus on the condition of widows and the children after the death of male farmer the study wants to highlight the linkages and the gaps identified the agricultural crisis in the intervention of government and NGO's.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design of the study is evaluative because the same respondents of 2014 were studied. Interview schedule was prepared to obtain primary source of data. Some case study was developed to support the findings. Among 46 families of deceased farmers we could reach only 31. Limitation of the study is that it has restricted only the Beed district and the same agrarian families who were listed in the farmer's suicide 2014. The study has focused the situation after three years of the death of farmers.

## AGRICULTURE SCENARIO IN MAHARASHTRA 2018

The paradox of the agriculture scenario in Maharashtra is that sugarcane, which occupies just 4 per cent of the states gross cropped area (GCA), takes away 65 per cent of the irrigation water, while cotton, soyabean, sorghum, maize, gram and tur, which together constitute more than 60 per cent of the GCA, get about 8 per cent of irrigation water, Unless this imbalance is corrected, the crisis will resurface whenever Maharashtra faces a drought.



(Note BCM = Billion cubic metre; Source, Author's calculation based on crop-wise irrigation water applie (data from CACP reports)

### Government's Budgetary Allocations for Agriculture

(figures in Crores)

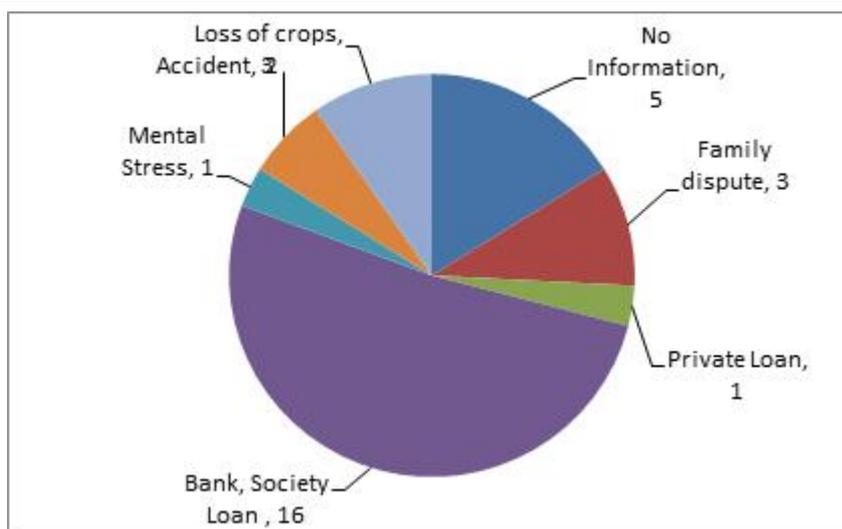
	2014-15 BE	2015-16 RE	2016-17
MAFW (excluding interest subvention)	31063	22958	29485
Interest Subvention for providing Short Term Credit to Farmers	6000	13000	15000
MAFW (including Interest Subvention)	37063	35958	11485
GDP at Current Market Prices (2011-12 series)	12488205	13567192	15065010
MAFW (including Interest Subvention) as % of GDP	0.297	0.265	0.295
Budget Outlay	1794892	1777477	1978060
MAFW (including Interest Subvention) as % of Budget Outlay	2.06	2.02	2.25

The above table shows that very little budget allocation was kept for agriculture purpose, just 2.25% of the total budget outlay. For a sector on which even today nearly 70% of the people are dependent for their livelihoods. Compare this to the tax concessions given to India's rich, some of whom are amongst the most wealthy people in the world—they amount to 4.1% of the country's GDP, and are equivalent to nearly one-third of the union budget!

### FINDINGS IN THE LIGHT OF OBJECTIVES

#### • Govt. Schemes

80 percent of the deceased farmers' families have received well under the MREGS scheme but very few wells have got water storage or availability of water. The well cost lot of energy, time and money to fulfill the required documents, at block or district level office. Due to lack of proper communication with the family from the government authority, objective to support the needy family not accomplished. Payment of well were not timely received. Many families complained that they were not able to received total installment.



- According to govt. sources, the last installment of the well would be received after submission of the record of completion of well. Though the families maintained that they were not in the position even to complete the well by their own cost. In some cases the well was constructed but did not have pipeline. So it is observed that a lot of confusion the level of farmers' family regarding the support or help by government. 100 percent immediate financial help was received in the kind of cash deposited by government. The deposited amount in the bank was supposed to be utilized for at least three to five years. And that should be utilized for the agriculture purpose only. However, almost all the deposited amount was withdrawn after six months and spent on some other purpose instead of agriculture. Nobody mentioned that the deposited amount brought those great help.

#### •Small Land holdings-

One of the major lacunas in the scheme is that more than eighty percent of women farmers are marginal farmers having less than one hectare land. Farm pond or dug well on such a small land holding is not possible. They need other agricultural support and the training.

In our earlier report of 2014 we had come to a conclusion that the masculinity and typical patriarchal approach had played a significant role in the suicidal temperament. In most of these families, the deceased farmer did not involve his wife or other women members in the family in the decision-making process nor he had even communicated his financial problems with the wife. Agriculture is a planned and organized activity. The manpower or the human resource is generally being available through farmers' own family. It helps to reduce expenditure as well as specifies the supervision. Women members from the family are taken for granted without paying them wages. While talking with family members of the deceased family, it was noticed that women were totally absent in the agri-related strategies and decisions as a whole. Male-dominated family system politicized all powers in the hands of man. Subordination of women restricted them to participate in agriculture activity and utilize their potentials to sustain it profoundly.

#### •Land Right and Patriarchal Mind set

After three years of farmer's suicide, the powers transferred into the hands of male of the next generation. In most of the cases where son of deceased farmer was above 18 yrs old, he became in charge of the family and owner of the property. Land was transferred on his name. The widows who had small school-going children were kept away from agriculture management. The restrictions on their mobility have tightened. They did not receive compensation directly. The patriarchal system in agrarian society is so deeply rooted or we can say that agrarian society is the main carrier of the patriarchy it transmitted it in all other conducting and allied caste system.

#### •Suicidal Mania

In 2014, we visited 46 families but after three years we could find and stress only 31 families of deceased farmers of 2014. Number of suicides were reported by farmer in village after 2014 in the study area. In some villages like 'Bolegaon' 12 farmer suicides were committed. In spite of that, no initiative was reported to have taken by govt. or any NGO to control the crisis. No change was brought in the lip of the widow government provided help in kinds of allotting well and one lakh deposited on the name of widow in the bank. On paper the financial assistance had been recorded to the deceased family and thus the responsibility of government was completed. In reality the social mobility of a widow was more restricted. She became more dependent on the relatives. The 'men' in the family like son, brother-in-law or closest male relative took the management of farm in his hand.

#### •Social Exclusion:-

Almost all widows had not been able to come forward to take the hold of farm. There were a lot of schemes in the agriculture department although they were 'unreachable' to them. The dependent also symbolized the male-centered doctrine to make the agri-development programmes accessible to widows.

**The table shows who is being working in the farm after the death of husband**

Sr. No.	Particular	Respondent
1	Brother	01
2	Son	19
3	Brother in law	02
4	Self	04
5	in-laws	05
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>

The social norms indicate that agriculture is not a proper field to women, because women lack the capacity of decision making, physical ability and cohabitation with the uncertain nature. This field needs cooperation, and communication with men and that is not allowed to women in rural community. Such approach was observed of the all departments. According to the life course theory a turning point is a substantial change in the course of a behavior trajectory. Individuals adapt to events socially defined transitions between positions in a given life domain and life stages passages from one combination of transitions to another in different life domains. The exclusion caused passing through stages of social detachments (or dislocation of family) and exclusion from assets needed for a livelihood. The study found that the natural or manmade calamity directly hit the opportunity in the lives of women. School dropout and child marriages were taken place after math of suicide of the man in the family. Being a widow, women had faced discrimination in cultural and religious phenomenon. They were humiliated in the sense of low dignity and lack of power social disqualification brings about sharp dorm in living standards, a weakening of social life, and marginalization with respect to those in work lead to poverty situation.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Agriculture is become a highly avoided occupation by the new generation. Those who did not get any other income

source, they turned to agriculture. Women who are considered as of lowest strata in society get directly affected by the policies and social norms in India. Distribution of land holding is great challenge to accomplish agriculture as a professional manner. Gender based policy should be constructed to protect women's rights and creating livelihood opportunities in agriculture.

**END NOTES**

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