



AN OUTLINE OF THE SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE FARMERS IN HAVERI DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA

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Abstract

One of the major economic issues faced by the country is agriculture as it remains the biggest employer in the country contributing to 41.4 per cent employment in 2020, according to the World Bank Development Indicator. But the sector contributes 18.8 percent of the country's GDP in 2021-22. farmers in the state like Meghalaya and Panjab are well off when compared with the farmers Haveri district of Karnataka. There the farmers are superior landlords and financially their condition is good. In Haveri district of Karnataka generally most of the farmers are poor having land ownership below five acres. They heavily depend on local money lenders and private banks to cultivate their land during the season. Most of the farmers are marginal and small agricultural land holders. The new generation is not interested in farming because of its low profitability. The social status depends on the economic conditions and the educational level attained by the people. The young generation is not willing to undertake farming mainly because of the problems faced by agriculture. There is a saying that farmers are born in debt, lives in debt and dies in debt.

Agriculture in Haveri district depends on the hopes and fancies of nature. The climate conditions and weather are uncertain. Young generation is attracted by the other sectors and even by jobs in other states leading to migration. Migration leads to labour shortage in farming. The complexity of circumstances leads to a thorough change in the social and economic conditions of the farmers in Haveri district. The following analysis helps us to understand the social and economic changes that occurred to the farmers in Haveri district of Karnataka.

Keywords: Agricultural Development, Maize Cultivation, Social - Economic conditions, Migration. Etc.

1. Introduction

Haveri district of Karnataka farmers have faced a great change in their lifestyle, mode of work, use of equipment's, education, and in their standard of living from time to time. model of development is compared with the development of neighbor states in India. The social and economic conditions of the farmers in Haveri district of Karnataka underwent a lot of changes. The standard of living and the social status of Haveri district farmers are better off compared with the past. This is only one side of the aspect. On the other hand, Haveri district of Karnataka farmers face a large number of problems even now. They need help from the respective state and central government to maintain their farming business. In Karnataka state agriculture is the major occupation of the majority of the rural population. Agriculture is heavily dependent on the southwest monsoon. While only 26.5 per cent of the sown area (30,900km²) is under irrigation, 64.60 per cent of the total geographical area is under cultivation. The following analysis help us to understand the measure taken by the government in helping the farmers and also the various changes in the social and economic conditions of the agriculture.



2. Objectives of the study

1. To analyses the trend in maize production.
2. To examine the socio and economic conditions of the maize cultivate farmers in the study area.
3. To diagnose the problems faced by the agriculture farmers.

3. Methodology

Haveri has been selected for the study as it is a major maize growing district (10.44% of total maize area) in Karnataka. In Karnataka, the area under maize cultivation during 2011-12 was 13, 31,000 hectares and in Haveri district the area was 1, 38,978 hectares. Socio-economic condition of the farmer may be analysed by relating their Social and Economic factors. Transparent of the area, production and yield of major crops will be analysed to understand their changing trend. Secondary data will be collected from relevant source.

3.1 The Area, Production and Yield of Major Crops in Haveri District -during the period 2013-14 to 2014-2015.

The total area under maize crop yield in Haveri district during the year 2014-15 was 3805 Avg Yield (Kg/Ha). In the same year this region prodn. (Lakh MT) 6.05 maize. In that year the state could also retain its relatively better position in maize productivity at the all India level. In 2014 the area under maize yield was very low compared to the other years. This was mainly due to the scarcity of labourers in the previous cultivation year. So in that period large areas of maize land was not harvested. Then after the introduction of harvesting machines , there has been significant increase in the area of maize land.

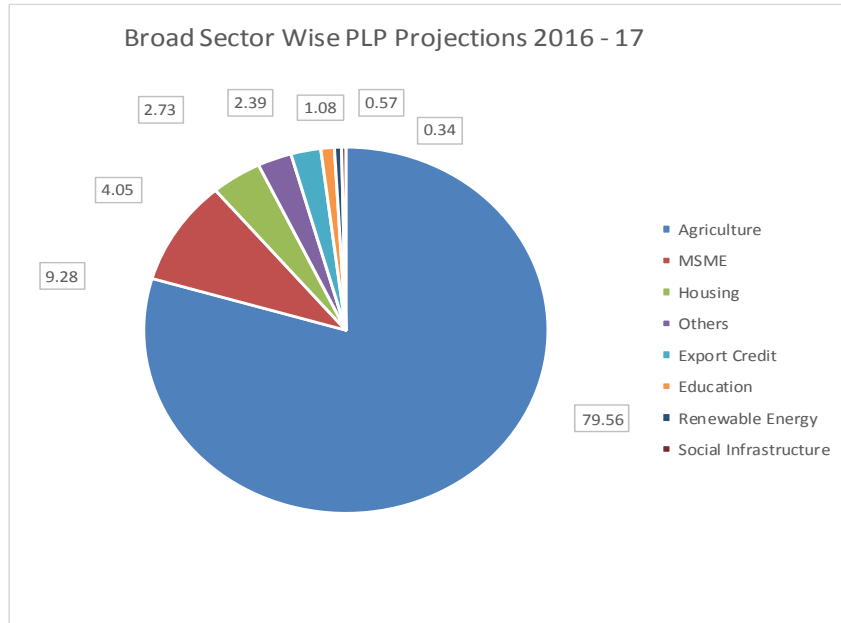
Table 1: Area, Production and yield of Major Crops in Haveri District

Crop	2013-14		2014-15		Avg. Yield(Kg/Ha) (2014-15)
	Area (Lakh Ha.)	Prodn. (Lakh MT)	Area (Lakh Ha.)	Prodn. Lakh MT)	
Paddy	0.47	1.01	0.49	1.44	2939
Jowar	0.29	0.52	0.37	0.39	1054
Maize	1.57	5.80	1.59	6.05	3805
Pulses	0.12	0.08	0.16	0.08	500
Oil seeds	0.34	0.41	0.34	0.38	1118
Sugarcane	0.08	4.46	0.10	5.49	54900
Cotton	0.98	0.55	0.99	0.59	596

Source: Haveri District at a Glance 2013-14, Dept of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry

4. Broad Sector wise PLP Projections (2016-17)

The District has good potential for area expansion under Plantation & Horticulture, promotion of Animal Husbandry as a subsidy occupation and for setting up of Food & Agro processing units. The economy of Haveri district may get good boost by encouraging infusion of technology, skills and investments, by establishment of agro based industries and industrial infrastructure. Coordinated efforts of all stake holders is needed for tapping the identified potential for development under each sector.



Source: Haveri District at a Glance 2013-14, Dept of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry.

5. The reason for decrease in maize cultivation

There are different factors which led to the decline of maize cultivation in Haveri district of Karnataka. For the convenience of study the factors are divided into two, they are social factors and economic factors.

5.1 Social factors

a. Seasonal shortage of labour supply

Maize cultivation was a labour intensive activity in Haveri district of Karnataka. The introduction of different policies of Government enabled the development of agricultural labourers. Thereby they shifted to other areas for doing different works. So during the maize cultivation period, there was serious shortage of agricultural labourers in Haveri district of Karnataka. Today farmers introduce some essential machinery to facilitate timely operations in the context of decreased labour supply. But even today there is a need for labourers for doing different activities. So this was one of the important causes for the decline in maize cultivation in Haveri district of Karnataka.

b. Land Ownership

There is wide inequality in the distribution of land holdings. A few minority including, money lenders and big business owners hold large plots of land. Majority are having small and uneconomic land holdings. So cultivation is not profitable to them.

c. Decline in the number of full time farmers

The scarcity of agricultural labourers resulted in increasing cost of production of maize cultivation in Haveri district. The erroneous Government policies like lack of commensurate price for production of maize in the cultivated period pushed farmers towards debt. This is the major reason for many farmers leaving cultivation, thus, leaving the land uncultivated. Small farmers with less than 0.5 ha of land, find it difficult to stay in maize production.



d. Small uneconomic size of land holdings and excessive fragmentation

An important factor which contributed to the decline in maize production is the implementation of the land reforms. It created acute shortage of labour and redistribution of surplus land to the land less people substantially declined the size of many holdings. It made maize cultivation economically unsustainable.

e. High incidence of crop failures

Maize cultivation activity is a gambling activity of nature, especially gambling of monsoon. There are various factors which has an impact on the productivity of maize. They are weed growth, attack of pest, disruption of bund, diseases affecting the plants etc. These are the main problems that affected the maize cultivation in Haveri.

f. Insufficient research and extension services

There is a need for proper research to be conducted on how to increase production of maize in Haveri district. The existing research works are not properly utilized by the higher authority. They must apply the research proposals for the development of maize cultivation. But truth is that these proposals are closed chapters and there is no practical application of these proposals. Even though some Krishi bhavans do not have proper records on important details related to farming, majority of them followed old data i.e., based on 2011 census. The higher authorities should take note of such irresponsibility on the part of public servants.

g. Increased trade union militancy

The trade union activities always protected the agricultural labourers. They did not take care of farmers. This attitude always created disputes between them. The trade union is very strong in Karnataka, especially in Haveri District, so day by day they forced the farmers to increase wages of agricultural labours. So the farmers reduced their farming activities because of the increasing labour cost.

h. New generations are not interested in farming

Different Government policies increased the standard of living of the agricultural labourers in Haveri district of Karnataka. So even though they have no work, they are not interested in doing agricultural activities. And also their parents are not willing to allow their children to work as agricultural labourers. All of them like white collar jobs. This attitude created scarcity of agricultural labourers in Haveri district of Karnataka.

i. Pressure of population on land

Density of population is very high in Haveri district of Karnataka. As a result more labour is available compared to the availability of land. So labourers often migrated to other areas in search of jobs. This has contributed to decrease in the availability of labourers in doing maize works in Haveri district of Karnataka.

j. Climatic condition

The poor climatic conditions also reduced the production of maize. All four river flowing through Haveri district, Varada, Kumadwati, Tungabhadra and Dharmha. When rain starts, maize fields become water logged. Unpredictable rains damage the bund and affects the growth of maize. If rain falls in the final stage, harvesting with the help of machine is not possible because it is wet in the fields. So farmers use labourers for harvesting in such a situation. The labour cost is very high in Haveri district of Karnataka, so the cost of production is very high in such circumstances for farmers. Some farmers will definitely reduce or may not take up farming in the next season. The frequent crop loss from floods and cheap compensation paid for crop loss makes maize farming a loss in the long run.



5.2 Economic factors

a. Increased cost of inputs and its low level of profitability

An important factor contributing to high cost of production is the cost on the infrastructure for maize cultivation. This cost occurs to farmers in every season. The growth of weed is another major cost component for farmers. They cannot predict its growth. Sometimes it is very high, and sometimes it is very small. So the growth of weed reduces the profit of farmers. The expenditure for hiring agricultural labourers is very high in Haveri district compared to other areas. The main problem is scarcity of labour in Haveri district and it affects the small and medium farmers. However, shortage of labour during peak operations is facilitating entry of machinery. The next cost item is the operational cost for machine and the cost for using machinery is not fixed by Government. But it varies according to the nature of maize land and its distance from the main road. The expenditure for pesticides and fertilizers also varies in every harvesting season. And last cost item is transportation cost. Transportation cost varies according to area to area. The expenditure for Haveri district are very high compared to Gadag. Since profitability is low, the farmers in Haveri district are not interested in maize cultivation. The profit level is narrow. Farmers avoid or reduce maize cultivation, thereby leading to decline in maize cultivation in Haveri.

b. The growth of real estate business

The maize cultivators turned towards real estate business, which was less risky compared to farming. As a result maize cultivation declined in Haveri.

c. The high job opportunities

As a result of high job opportunities in the private field the presence of youngsters in farming occupation declined.

d. Lack of proper marketing system

The marketing system for agricultural products was poor. The State government announced the Minimum Support Price for all farmers applicable to the crop season. They do not get money on time due to administrative and coordination deficiencies. As a result there is less interest in taking up maize cultivation in Haveri.

e. High remittance from neighbor State

As a result of high job opportunities neighbor state farmers and labourers have been giving up farming and taking up jobs neighbor state. This has resulted in decline of maize cultivation in Haveri.

f. Development of construction sectors

The development of construction sector opened up new areas of employment in the nearby towns of Hubballi and Davanagere districts. The agricultural labourers found a lucrative avenue for jobs not far from their homes. As a result a large number of agricultural labourers gave up farm labour and shifted to the construction sector. Due to this there is scarcity of labour in Haveri. Similarly farmers shifted to construction field because of scarcity of labour, high cost of labour etc. As a result of which there was a decline in maize cultivation.

g. Governments laziness about funding maize price

The Government is often lazy in providing incentives to farmers. The farmers often take big loans for conducting farming. The Government doesn't release the funds on time, this creates huge losses for the farmers. It will be good if the Government takes step for marketing maize without delay. The area under production of maize has decreased over the years. This is mainly due to the some economic and



social factors. One problem is related to the efficiency of labour at the operating time for cultivation. To overcome these obstacles there is a need for assisting labour with machine. So to avoid the problem of shortage in agriculture labour, farmers have adopted intensive maize farming and mechanisation of maize cultivation.

6. The remedies for the problems faced by the agricultural farmers even after seventy five years of planning and development in India the agricultural sector remains in a poor state and the policy initiatives have failed to provide any breakthrough. The growth rate of agriculture has lagged behind that of the other sectors. The sector which is the largest employer of workforce, accounted for a sizeable 18.8 per cent (2021 – 22) in Gross Value added (GVA) of the country registering a growth of 3.6 per cent in 2020 – 21 and 3.9 per cent in 2021 – 22.

a. Education, training and extension

Education is the main pillar of human development and a major factor in agricultural development. Research shows that primary education attainments and literacy, training in basic skills and extension services have an immediate and positive impact on farmers' productivity. The farmer is educated, the more he stands to gain in income from the use of new technologies the more rapidly he adjusts to technological changes. The effects are beneficial to the whole population, thereby increasing the capacity of the rural population.

b. The role of rural women in agricultural development

A woman in agriculture has placed a considerable increase in the women's capacity to produce, provide, and prepare food in the face of already considerable obstacles. Women's full potential in agriculture must be realized if the goal of promoting agricultural and rural development is to be achieved.

c. Availability of farm inputs

Indian farmers are not getting subsidized seeds in good quality at the correct time, sufficient fertilizers and pesticides. Similarly the governmental machinery is not helpful in providing farm equipments at the correct time and also inadequate irrigational facility.

d. Information and communications

Information and communication are also essential for sustainable agricultural and rural development. Investments in rural information systems can improve farmers' knowledge levels and management skills. Raising the level of awareness, acquiring information, sharing experiences, changing attitudes and developing skills call for processes of communication and learning.

e. Agricultural research and extension

In most less developed countries, the institutional capacity for research and extension is weak. As a result, the technology available is insufficiently adapted to local conditions and research results do not come up with a variety of technological solutions adapted to the range of socio-economic and agro-ecological conditions existing in the country, such as the differing technical needs of female and male farmers. Lack of technological alternatives is often mentioned as a constraint to irrigation development (e.g. different models of irrigation pumps, suited to the needs of different users). Where techniques and technologies developed by research are available, their spread is faced with a number of difficulties such as the poor delivery of the extension and training services that are not necessarily targeted to the appropriate users. Weak extension and training services and the consequent lack of technological



knowledge of farmers are often considered to be the major factors behind the insufficient adoption of improved technologies. could be overcome by improving farmers' access to knowledge.

f. Investment in agriculture

Government should allot more in developmental schemes to agriculture. Heavy investment is required for promoting irrigational facilities. The present system is not sufficient to meet the requirements. Our agriculture which is mainly dependent on nature requires an alternative, that is investment required for controlling both flood and drought. Permanent heavy investment is required to construct the outer bunds and the inner bunds in Haveri district to promote the agricultural sector in Haveri region.

g. Encourage a healthy competition

The Government should grant more attractive rewards to the largest yield producing maize lands. These evaluations must be conducted separately for Haveri district of Karnataka. So this would encourage maize cultivation in Haveri.

h. Steps taken for control environmental problems

The Government should take proper steps for the study of environmental problems created by chemical based farming in Haveri district of Karnataka. Farmers should cultivate their land more profitably without disturbing the ecology.

i. Decrease the use of chemical pesticides and weeds

The Government should control the use of chemical based harmful pesticides and weeds. Haveri district is fully covered with different water bodies and these water resources are connected with each other. So the use of dangerous pesticides diluted in water, pollutes the water bodies. The Government should promote eco-friendly methods to control weeds and pest, thereby protecting the environment.

j. Pollution control methods

Haveri district is polluted to a very large degree. Industrial revolution and green revolution are the main reason behind this activity. Besides these types of pollution, human and animal wastes make the environmental pollution worse. This is mainly due to lack of proper utilization of sewage facilities in Haveri. This was the cause for the spread of diseases like dermatitis, jaundice, colitis and amoebic dysentery. So the Government should take powerful steps to control these types of pollution and also punish the offenders.

k. The policies to control price hike in the use of fertilizers

Price hike refers to increasing price of fertilizers. The Government should fix minimum price for fertilizers.

l. Increase the amount of subsidy for machines

The amount of subsidy for machines should be increased. Labour shortage is a serious problem in Haveri.

m. Develop infrastructure facilities

The infrastructure facilities should be developed by the respective Government and transportation is serious problem in Haveri. Therefore Government should give special emphasis on development of infrastructure facilities for the development of the agricultural sector.



n. Do not take time lag for funding

The farmers do not get funds provided by the Government on time. This should be looked in to by the Government. Steps should be taken for timely distribution of funds. This is one of the serious problems faced by the farmers in the study area. Large number of farmers argues that they faced different difficulties for attaining funds. Majority of the farmers are not rich. They started cultivation mainly by borrowing money from money lenders. Due to this reason time lag in disbursing funds creates difficulties for the farmers.

o. Social and cultural factors

The social and cultural factors hinder the economic development of most of the under developed countries. Education and training are very poor especially for woman in India. The social and cultural factors mostly depend on the educational status.

p. Lessons from Experience

In the developed countries only below 5 per cent of the population is depending upon agriculture. Their production and productivity helps them to attain not only self-sufficiency in food production but also a very good share of foreign exchange is earned from agricultural exports. Hence, lessons from Western countries can be adopted to suite our conditions to promote our agriculture. We can also depend on the advice given by experts in foreign countries in the agricultural sector.

Conclusion

Technology, resource use, institutions, knowledge and markets need to be adapted to deal with constraints affecting particular commodity systems. This helps to respond to problems of natural resource degradation which ensures that advantages of new opportunities are taken through diversification.

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