

A STUDY OF SMALL AND MARGINAL FARMERS IN RAJASTHAN

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ABSTRACT

India is an agricultural country whose maximum population resides in rural areas. Poverty in the village is the shadow of unemployment and illiteracy. Small and marginal farmers, rural artisans live here. The villages of India are trapped in the cycle of malnutrition, poor education, poor health and low productivity etc. Therefore the rural socio-economic problems are multidimensional and multi-directional. Agriculture is the main occupation of rural areas in India. Most of the rural communities are small and marginal farmers. They are socio-economically weak due to low productivity and production in agriculture related areas. To uplift them, higher level of education, employment, health, social security and law are needed. But among the immediate tasks, appropriate steps should be taken to bridge the gap between potential and actual agricultural yield through appropriate technology guidance facilities and services. For which there is a provision of an important agricultural loan by the government. Farmers require money for fertilizer, seeds, crop plowing, harvesting and transporting the crop to the market. This earlier had to take loan from the moneylenders at higher interest. Due to which the condition of the farmers was brought to economic backwardness. Nationalization of banks by the government in 1969 gave the opportunity to the farmers to repay the loan in reasonable installments at low interest rate and effective measures were taken to meet the need of agricultural loan. . The impact of financial institutions on small and marginal farmers in Jaipur district has been highlighted in the paper.

Keywords: Small and Marginal Farmers, Multidimensional and Multi-Directional.

Introduction

The number of small and marginal farmers living in India is 86.2% of the total number of farmers. 47.3% of the crop area, while the total number of holdings in Rajasthan is 58.19 lakhs. Out of which 18.49 lakh (31.78%) are marginal farmers, 12.10 lakh (20.79%) are small farmers and 27.60 lakh (47.43%) are farmers holding land above 2 hectares. The main reasons for low productivity of small and marginal farmers in the agriculture sector in India are lack of irrigation facilities, limited use of fertilizers, low or non-availability of high yielding seeds, soil erosion, Lack of rainfall, weather, agricultural mechanization, Feudal land relations, rural indebtedness, problems of marketing etc. have to be faced. Credit is an important factor in solving this problem. Various schemes run by governments, various loan schemes and loan facilities provided by banks have contributed.

Categorization of Farmers

In agriculture Census, the operational holdings are categorized in five size classes as follows:

SI No.	Category	Size-Class
1	Marginal	Below 1.00 hectare
2	Small	1.00-2.00 hectare
3	Semi-Medium	2.00-4.00 hectare
4	Medium	4.00-10.00 hectare
5	Large	10.00 hectare and above

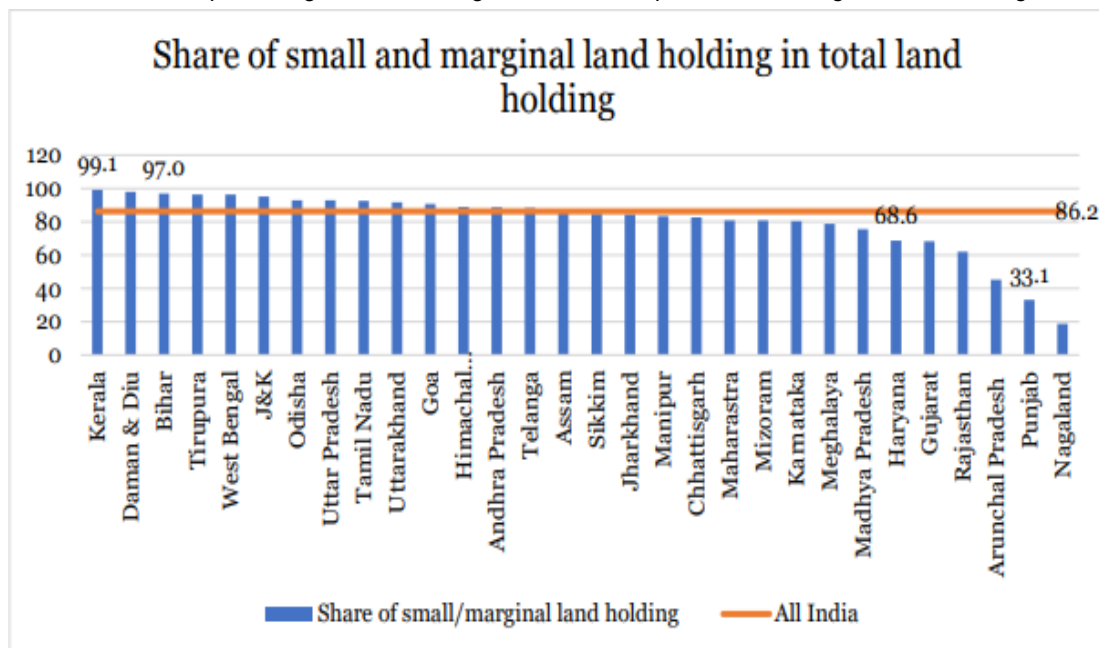
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Operational Holding

According to Agriculture Census, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, "operational holding defined as "all land which is used wholly or partly for agricultural production and is operated as one technical unit by one person alone or with others without regard to title, legal form, size or location" is taken as statistical unit for data collection in Agriculture Census. "The concept of agricultural operational holdings adopted in India differs to some extent with that of FAO, as it does not include those holdings which are not operating any agricultural land and are engaged exclusively in livestock, poultry and fishing etc.

Small and marginal farmers with less than two hectares of land account for 86.2% of all farmers in India. As per provision data for Agriculture census 2015-16, the total number of operational holdings in the country was 146 million and total operated area was 157.14 million hectares. Total operation land holding in Rajasthan state was 76.55 lakh. Out of these 21.90% are small farmers, 40.12% are marginal farmers, 18.50% are semi-medium farmers, 14.79% are medium farmers and 4.69% are large farmers.

State wise percentage share of Marginal and Small operational holdings to Total holdings:



Source: Agricultural Statistics at a glance, 2018

Institutional Vs Non-Institutional

Institutional are Those Financial Institutions which work under RBI with specified guidelines such as like commercial bank. As like commercial bank, mutual saving bank and another Union such as SHGs. the mode of acquiring a loan is very difficult since it involves many terms of credit and needs many documents. In case of interest rate this Institutions will have less interest rate because they are more secure.

Non institutional does not categorize under any authority. They are independent. These sources include money lenders example money lenders, friends and relatives. The mode of acquiring a loan is very easy since it acquired from the relative and friends. They do not need any complicated documents for advancing loans. It is not authenticated any authority, they charges a higher interest rate. Most of the poor people in India acquire a loan from the money lenders and other informal sources.

An Introduction to Rajasthan

Rajasthan is historical and one of the most beautiful states in the country. The pink city of Jaipur is the capital of Rajasthan. The Population of Rajasthan according to the 2011 census stands at about 68 million, making it the 8th most populated state in India. The state makes up about 5.6% of the country's

population. The density of population per sq. Km. is about 200 and a lot below the national average. The state has a growth rate of about 21% percent which is the 11th highest growth rate in the country. It shares boundaries with Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab .Its shares international boundary with the Pakistan.

Objective of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To know about the condition of small and marginal farmers.
- To know the reason of backwardness of small and marginal farmers.
- To Knowing the reasons for uplifting small and marginal farmers.

Methodology

On the basis of study, review and analysis of various letters, articles, documents, the situation of small and marginal farmers in India and Rajasthan was studied and evaluated. This is a descriptive research paper. It is completely based on secondary data. Data on which has been collected through reports, books, magazines, internet.

Problems of Small and Marginal Farmers in Rajasthan

- On an average 60% of the area of Rajasthan is desert. The amount of salinity and alkalinity in the land is high, which is not suitable for agriculture.
- Agriculture in the state is dependent on rain. Uncertainty of monsoon hurts crop production. Non-availability of fertilizers on time, lack of awareness about fertilizers, crop failure due to water crisis is challenges which directly hinder capital formation and investment.
- Low productivity and non-availability of fair price makes agriculture profitable. Cultivation of crops alone does not provide livelihood.
- Most of Rajasthan is affected by lack of basic amenities like electricity, drinking and irrigation water, cold storage, road map, weak banking infrastructure, grain silos.
- Farmers need finance for agriculture and allied. Which he uses to buy better food, seeds, machinery, cattle. This cannot be accomplished by the finance received from the financial institutions. He is also unable to make full use of the financial assistance he receives. Here the condition and environment of repaying the loans of the farmers is very bad.
- Large part of agricultural land is with non-agricultural people. This gets the fields cultivated by people hired on lease, daily or monthly wages. Due to which the needy farmers do not get the benefit of the scheme sponsored by the government banking.
- Poverty, illiteracy is high among the farmers. Because of which they are unable to adopt new techniques of agriculture. Because of which scientific techniques are not used in agriculture.
- According to the 2011 census, the population density of Rajasthan is 200 per square km. While India has 464 square kilometers, that means the distance between people living from one place to another is more. Due to the lack of basic facilities, the expenditure on schemes sponsored by the government and banks is high.
- Due to the lack of small scale industries related to the agriculture sector, the additional income is less or nominal. Due to which a large part of the farmers are dependent on animal husbandry and its related areas.
- Chemical fertilizers, pesticides, agriculture machinery, new technology, high yield varieties seeds all are very expensive and not easy to reach farmers. The financial assistance is not sufficient for use modern technology to small and marginal farmers.

Remedy of Small and Marginal Farmers in Rajasthan

- Farmers are not familiar with the daily paperwork. They find the paperwork long and complicated. Due to which they keep their attitude towards banks low. Due to which the scheme sponsored by the banks does not reach them. Therefore, the time spent on these paper works should be reduced in the process.
- The government should spend more on the basic needs of the person such as higher level education, health, employment, law and social security schemes because it has been seen that small and marginal farmers spend a major part of the loan given on their farms on these things.

- The Government of India should analyze the economic and social census data and find out the reason for backwardness on the basis of that, so that education, health, basic needs and banking institutions should be opened on that basis.
- The process of getting the benefits of the government scheme is very complicated, due to which corruption is born. The biggest victims of which are the small and marginal farmers. Therefore, this process should be simplified.
- The fear of becoming a defaulter is troubling the farmers. They find formal loans a burden; They feel that if they do not make the payment on time, the bank will take them to court and sell their property. So this fear should be eradicated through financial literacy.

Conclusion

According to agriculture census 2015-16, the large number of small and marginal farmers, close to 126 million, means that it is challenging to reach them with new technology and agricultural support, schemes provided by the government. In addition, these farmers held about 74.4 million hectares of land, that is, each had an average holding of only 0.6 hectares. This was not enough to generate a surplus that could sustain their families financially, explaining the growing crisis in Indian agriculture. The survey showed that between 2010-11 and 2015-16, the number of small and marginal farms increased by nearly 9 million. The average landholding size for all farmers decreased from 1.15 hectares in 2010-11 to 1.08 hectares in 2015-16. In operated or cultivated areas, Rajasthan tops the list with 20.9 million hectares, followed by Maharashtra (19.9 million hectares) and Uttar Pradesh (17.45 million hectares). The survey also showed that the proportion of farms operated by women increased from 12.8% in 2010-11 to 13.9% in 2015-16, indicating that more women are managing farm operations.

Rajasthan has a huge potential in horticulture crops like olive, dates, Aonla, Pomegranate, etc. which needs to be promoted. In agriculture sector, the present-day challenge is to ensure overall farm prosperity. The challenges are also to provide proper institutional mechanisms and undertake organizational and management reforms for overcoming the felt constraints coming in way of the farm prosperity. Crop diversification and better irrigation infrastructure can improve the situation of its farmers.

Small and marginal farmers are an extremely hard working class of people. They are efficient but poor at the same time. Also, they lack awareness about new strategies in agriculture. They adopt no or limited technology in irrigation and land development processes as they require heavy deployment of capital to invest in agriculture. Institutional and policy measures for banks to mobilize faster and credit to the public in a more efficient manner Reforms are needed for effective delivery.

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