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AGED FARMERS IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION

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ABSTRACT

Agriculturists in particular aged farmers have been the worst suffers from the onslaught of globalization. It is the process by events, decisions, and activities in one part of the world have significant consequences for other part of the globe. With the globalization Indian agriculture opened up to global agribusiness and Indian agriculture partly traditional farm is adversely affected. Due to globalization aged farmers those some are less educated and some are illiterates well known about traditional farming they have to depend on seeds like Monsanto, Cargill and Syn Genta etc., fertilizers and pesticides which is makes Indian agriculture is very expensive but lack of proper credit facilities for agriculture, makes farmers turn to private moneylenders who charge exorbitant rates of interest. In order to repay these debts, farmers borrow again and get caught in a debt trap and finally they committed suicide.

KEYWORDS

Indian agriculture, globalisation, aged farmers, suicide.

INTRODUCTION

Ageing is considered as natural and universal process. India is the country with second largest aged population in the world. India's aged population is estimated at 10 crore in 2011 and is projected to reach 20 crore by 2030. The proportion of aged persons in the total population is expected to increase from 8.3 percent in 2011 to 12.4 percent in 2026. Globalisation of the world economy for the last two decades has brought about an increasing integration of economies and societies around the world. The globalization process is characterized by rapid growth in international financial transactions; fast growth in trade; surge in foreign direct investment largely contributed by transitional corporations; the emergence of global markets and the diffusion of technologies and ideas through rapid expansion of a globalised transportation and communication system. India is a country with a fine tradition of farming the aged farmers represents a storehouse of knowledge and experience regarding traditional farming but in twenty first century due to globalization and urbanization changing the cultivation and farm style which is affecting the traditional base agriculture and aged farmers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the different aged farmers and their problems.
2. To give remedies regarding the problems faced by aged farmers.
3. To know overall situation of the aged farmers in the era of globalization.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study mainly deals with aged farmers and the methodology adopted for the study is case study method followed by dairy method. The historical research method is also used to give some remedies to the aged farmers. The other research methods like experimental research methodology and explanatory research methodology are not useful for this purpose of study. The researcher also used observation method to give practical based remedies in this paper.

INDIAN AGRICULTURE UNDER GLOBALIZATION

Agriculture always has been celebrated as the primary sector in India. Indian agriculture is agrarian in nature and most of the farming is done by the small and marginal farmers. India is an agrarian economy which means, agriculture is the pre-dominant sector of the Indian economy. True to this, even to this day, in spite of the Indian economy opening out to the world and globalization close to 70% of the population still depends on agriculture for its livelihood. "Agriculture is the backbone of the Indian Economy" said Mahatma Gandhi six decades ago even today the situation is still the same. But the Indian agriculture has undergone significant changes and transformation under globalization. Globalisation has paved way for agricultural export promotion policies and it is depends upon a of internal factors such as of internal factors such as domestic production and distribution situation for exportable commodities, the demands for the commodity in the local market, competitive international price for the commodity, the world economic scenario, exchange rate and inflation rate in countries competing with the home country in the international market etc., besides aged agricultural workers who are landless are especially disadvantaged when work is scarce. Since agricultural work is seasonal, sustained employment is only possible during busy times are effects on aged farmers.

The openings of Indian agriculture to the global market over the past two decades have increased costs while reducing yields and profits for many farmers, to the point of great financial and emotional distress. As a result, smallholders and aged farmers are often trapped in a cycle of debt. Indebtedness is a major and proximate cause of farmer suicide in India. According to the eminent sociologist Emil Durkheim mental weakness is not the only psychological factor which compels farmers to commit suicide, but the social factor is the only thing which compels them to commit suicide. On the sociological theory of Durkheim, government which implements agricultural policy in the country, government machinery which fixes the agricultural production value and planners who have been trying to develop country through the medium of planning are responsible for the increasing incidents of suicides among farmers.

IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE LITERACY TO THE FARMERS

Education is undergoing constant changes under the effects of globalization. The effects of Globalisation on education bring rapid developments in technology and communications are foreseeing changes within school systems across the world. The rise of a global society, driven by technology and communication developments are shaping children, the future citizens of the world into 'global citizens', intelligent people with a broad range of skills and knowledge to apply to a competitive, information based society. "Access of the young to modern education can impair intergenerational ties undermining the status of older people by making their experience and attachment to tradition appear outmoded and irrelevant to technical progress." (United Nations, 1991)

The globalization of international trade and marketing for food grains and other agricultural products Indian markets are opened for foreign goods as well as Indian farmers can export their agricultural products. While exporting their products farmers should maintain international standards of pesticides residue levels. The following tables show international standards of pesticide residue levels of agricultural products.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS OF PESTICIDES RESIDUE LEVELS

TABLE 1

Organochlorine Pesticides		Organophosphorus Pesticides	
Insecticide /Pesticide (mgm/kg)- Europe	Max-Permissible Limits	Insecticide /Pesticide (mgm/kg)- Europe	Max-Permissible Limits
Aldrin	ND (not detected)	Acephate	0.02
Chlordane (cts &trans)	ND	Azinphos-methi	1.00
Chlorothalonil	1.00	Chlorpyrifos	0.05
DDT (all isomers)	ND	Chlorpyrifos methyl	0.02
Dichlofluaniid	10.00	Drazinon	0.02
Dicofol	2.00	Dichlorvos	0.10
Dieldrin	ND	Dimerthoate	1.00
Endosulfan (all isomers)	0.50	Ehion	0.50
Endrin	0.01	Etrimphos	ND
Lindane	0.5	Fenchlorphos	0.01
HCH (alpha &beta)	ND	Fenitrothion	0.50
Heptachlor	0.01	Malathion	0.10
		Profenophos	0.05
		2-chlorophenol(metabolite)	ND
		Methamidophos	0.01
		Methidathion	0.50
		Mevinphos	0.10

Source: Agricultural University Dharwad.

The level of education is an important factor in maintaining international standards of pesticide residue levels but generally aged farmers either illiterates or less educated so it is obviously very difficult to understand meaning of the above said table for aged farmers. Science based education is required at present situation where as experience regarding traditional farming of aged farmers is not relevant.

Globalisation created competitive international price for the commodity. Now a day's agriculture became a commercialization and most of the farmer's left traditional agriculture and turn towards profitable commercialized cash crops. This is one of the reasons for inflation of prices which is caused heavy loss in agriculture. The prices of agriculture goods are not stagnant; prices change day to day. When supply of agricultural products is less in market the price is automatically increased that year and the farmer gets profitable price for their products that year. For example, in 2011 the wholesale onion price hits 4900 per quintal. Those who produced onion they get profit, in order to get profit next year all the farmers grown onion. Due to increase in production of onion supply of goods in market also increased, automatically demand decreased and price was fallen 4900 to 400 per quintal resulted big loss.

DIFFICULTIES FOR AGED FARMERS

The impact of globalization on the old is multi-faceted. Primarily the old has to face two types of challenges, one from the family and the other from the society. Globalisation and Westernization has changed the worldly outlook of people and ageing is now having more implications to the individual and society as this process has now taken a new socio-economic dimension. In modern times due to the urbanization and the job requirement of the young people migration to cities from rural areas in search of employment was a common phenomenon. This was for various reasons especially for luxurious life, handsome salary and for numerous job opportunities. The people are following western countries and nuclear family system is fast coming up leaving the old people helpless and neglected. Ageds were considered as a social phenomenon in India till the early 1980's. But now they are looked as economic phenomena as the society is moving from social to economic.

The aged farmers in the traditional farming were using traditional seeds, manures and primitive implements for farming work and the expenditure on agriculture was minimum, but the World Bank's structural adjustment policies forced India in to open up its seed sector to global corporation was caused farm saved seeds were replaced by corporate seeds. The poor aged peasants have to buy new seeds for every planting season and what was a traditional free resource available by putting aside small portion of the crop, becomes a commodity. The invention of state of art agriculture implements, HYV seeds, effective pesticides and chemical fertilizers and with the ever increasing demand for agricultural products farmers showed a lot interests in incorporating new methods of cultivation they started cultivating cash crops. They are investing too much on HYV seeds, chemical fertilizers and pesticides. This is how labour intensive farming transformed itself into capital intensive farming to meet out expenditure the farmers. Cash crops like chilly, cotton and tobacco need far more inputs of pesticides, fertilizers and water than the traditional crops require fertilizer and pesticide prices increased when farmers turned to the cultivation of cash crops.

Fertilizers and pesticides are important inputs for increasing agricultural production. But excessive and unbalanced use of these chemicals is fraught with danger serious problems have arisen because of unbalanced use of fertilizers. Nitrogen applications tend to be too high in relation to the amount of potassium and phosphate used. This partly the result of price differentials and partly lack of knowledge among farmers about the need for balanced fertilizers use. The consequences are soil nutrient depletion.

Besides cash crops cultivation has posed many new challenges to the credit sector. The credit provided by the cooperative sector is not sufficient therefore the farmers has to reach the commercial banks with higher rates of interest and cumbersome documentation besides the availability of the branches of commercial banks in the rural areas very less and almost these branches situated in urban areas, in this situation for getting loan farmers have to go city branches. It is difficult to aged farmers traveling to city, proper paper procedures for getting loans, language problems while approaching bank officers.

REMEDIES FOR AGED FARMERS

1. The farmers who have crossed 60 years are considered as 'senior farmers' and special rules and special concessions should be made and extended to them.
2. To overcome the inherent disadvantages of farming in the context of globalization of Indian agriculture the aged farmers should adopt contract farming where the companies provide modern inputs and extension services and buy back the product at a specified price.
3. The aged farmers should be educated about the methods of using pesticides, fertilizers, suitable for crop pattern through the agricultural universities.
4. Government should provide loan facility to aged farmers at low interest in easier manner through nationalized and co-operative banks.
5. Government should provide seeds to aged farmers at the Panchayat level.
6. The aged farmers should be grown the crops which suit the agro-climatic condition and balanced crops.

CONCLUSION

The impact of globalization has changed India as one of the global superpowers. The fact that "agriculture and global food security have more prominence on the international development agenda today than at any time in the past 30 years", there is almost no discussion among development policymakers of the age profile of farmers. The schemes should be introduced from the government that there must be some provision towards aged farmers. The National level schemes will definitely help them. The same schemes must be locally implemented through the state government.

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