Stakeholders Approach for Relief Provision to Distressed Farmers

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ABSTRACT
Farmer distress has been increasing to such an extent that this has led many of them to give up life and commit suicides. There are no signs of relief for farmers. This is despite the government granting a decade of financial aid packages in drought prone areas of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra and Kerala with heavy rainfall. Insufficient rains or floods have increased the number of farmer suicides in the recent years and are likely to increase if proper and effective solutions are not carved out. The issue is critical and hence needs quick action to find a stable solution. Adopting a mixed method approach, this article aims to identify the challenges faced by the farmers in India, on the basis of framing strategies to alleviate farmers’ issues, understanding the choice of agro-business strategies and recommending solutions to overcome these challenges.

KEYWORDS
Agriculture, Aid, Calamities, Drought, Famine, Flood, Grant, Rain, Strategies

INTRODUCTION
Large number of families of poor farmers make living from the agricultural produce by putting in own labour, dedication to the work and facing hardships. This is due to venerable historical occupation that has kept the uneducated class of aged and young people occupied in most of the parts of India. However, the tradition of continuing agro-business on a large scale is getting condensed day by day owing to the quirky and vague nature of the climate. Majority of the farmers although possess low level of education have grown in agro experience. These farmers are divided into two main classes such as the rich and poor. The poor farmers owning a small piece of land cultivate it wherein most of the family members are engaged, combined with borrowed funds which they use for buying seeds, fertilizers and for land preparation expenses. They take loans with the anticipation that once there is a harvest they would earn sufficient amount to earn and repay the loan. However, the game wholly depends upon the whims and vagaries of nature. There have been reports coming from various places in the State of Maharashtra and Gujarat that the farmer community believes that the nature has played hard game with the lives of the farmers thereby making their life highly uncertain and challenging. The effects of these unfavourable climatic conditions are so severe that the farmer community takes it as a negative consequence of their destiny as life has failed to offer them peace and prosperity and so end
up life by committing suicide. Few of such farmers, who are mentally strong to survive, are capable to bear the conditions, have been observed to get into dishonest practices like an evolving in crimes, engaged into the acts of theft, robbery, cheating, frauds and the like. Therefore a comprehensive yet entrepreneurial approach which will cater for youth in agriculture approach is needed to keep social balance and designing of appropriate polices is possible (Deshpande & Baporikar 2009; Deshpande, 2011). Newspaper reports have indicated that the cases of suicides continued and have been rising similar to a chain effect. As a result, it is a matter of severe apprehension, as the vicious status is compelling the government to take prompt and equitable actions. The field of agricultural management is emerging in which new management approaches are being introduced to tackle issues within. Hence, this study is important for a number of reasons: first, the focus of the study is on a current flaming issue of distressed farmers, and that too for providing relief. Secondly this paper demonstrates the influence of such approaches for providing better aid. Scheme prepared and proposed here consists of variety of counteractive activities which have been thought out entirely to offer as social welfare measure for the betterment of the farming community. Thus, the objectives of this paper are:

- To identify the challenges faced by the farmers;
- To find the basis of framing strategies to alleviate farmers issues;
- To understand choice of agro-business strategy;
- To recommend the solutions towards the challenges.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the need, the study initiated with, probing into the causes and effects of various agro-business models implemented in the past, from the literature being the secondary source of information. While primary data has been generated in context with the proposed model with a view to resolve the challenges in that business it has been substantiated by evidences of diverse stakeholders. Thus the paper is based on method of review of literature. In the literature review process, the principles of a systematic review as recommended by Jesson, Matherson & Lacy (2011) are adopted. First a research plan is developed comprising the research questions that are of interest in answering, the keywords, and a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria. Focus is directed on the current status of research into challenges faced by farmers while future research is expected to direct making the farmer independent and self-reliant and to find appropriate methods of risk sharing since that is promising area for future study.

Basis of Design

Believing that, successful strategy lies not in having all the right answers, but rather in asking the right questions help making smart choices. To begin with the design therefore, based on the revelation of background of the farmer and despite variety of measures taken by the Government, the farmers’ issues never ended and gave relief in the real sense since their living depended on the vagaries of nature. Focus is drawn on poor farmer. Therefore, the central theme came up for the basis of strategy design was that of farmer’s, survival while the growth and the development of agricultural land, use of improved methods of agriculture followed subsequently. Initiatives, in terms of question and answer approach, were then thought and applied and outcome verified to make it lead to sustainability. The chronology of the answers to the basis of design is explained hereunder:

1. Philosophy strongly came up to focus on the living expenses that are normally required by a farmer family. Payment of regular monthly remuneration to the poor farmers came up as the right solution to the issue. One family of farmer is considered to be consisting of four persons. Therefore, the solution of remuneration was planned to cover living expenses of this size of family.
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