

BOOK REVIEWS

Agrarian Distress and Farmers Suicides in India by M. Yadagira Charyulu, Published by Serials Publications, New Delhi, 2013, Price : ₹ 1295.

The book under review is a combination of secondary data collected from All India level and primary data collected from four districts of Andhra Pradesh. The empirical study was carried out in three regions of Andhra Pradesh i.e. Warangal and Mahaboobnagar districts in Telangana region, Anantapur district in Rayalaseema region and Guntur district in Andhra region. The study concentrated among the households where the farmers committed suicide.

The study conceived the following objectives and hypotheses :

Objectives

1. To understand and analyse agrarian scenario in Indian economy in general with a special focus on Andhra Pradesh.
2. To observe and assess trends in farmers' suicide phenomena at all India level with particular reference to Andhra Pradesh.
3. To look into the factors that led to farmers' suicides in the study area and their impact on socio-economic, psychological and moral aspects of affected households.
4. To examine the government sponsored measures and their impact to tackle this problem.
5. To come up with appropriate alternative policy measures to find a long lasting solution to the agrarian crisis and its resultant suicides of farmers.

Hypotheses

1. Institutional and market driven policies of globalised world economic phenomena have changed socio-economic scenario of the rural India.
2. Globalisation led liberalisation policies and reforms in agriculture have caused distress

among small and marginal farmers in particular and the agrarian economy in general.

3. Institutional policy formulations obviously proved as temporary packages and failed to find out sustainable relief to the problems of agriculture sector in a comprehensive manner.

The author tried to put the Indian agricultural scenario in an overarching framework under the following broad themes: Landholding Pattern, Subsidies, Irrigation, Climate Change, Seed Sector, Fertilisers & Pesticides, Research and Extension, Agricultural Insurance, Investment and Capital Formation, GDP and Agriculture, Production Trends, Output Prices-MSP, Marketing and, Farm Business Income.

To support the macro picture, field study was carried out and the following variables/ issues, were analysed :

- Using the caste as an indicator, the author came to the conclusion that large majority of the farmers belonging to backward castes committed suicides. Substantial number of farmers belonging to the forward caste community also committed suicides but less than the backward caste communities. Suicides among SC/ST farmers are very negligible.
- Based on age profiles of victims, it was brought out that more than three-fourths victims are in the age group of 20-50 years.
- Almost 90 per cent of the victims committed suicide by consuming pesticides.
- Number of years of experience in agriculture has not helped the farmers to come out from the distress situation.
- Tenant farmers are more prone to commit suicide due to over-burden of cost of cultivation.

- Changing pattern of crops from cereal based to commercial crops identified as one of the important reasons.
- Price fluctuations and international trade and tariffs of agricultural commodities apart from the lack of effective implementation of minimum support price for agricultural produce.
- Increased cost of cultivation includes seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and labour.
- Dependency on non-institutional source for credit support rather than failure of institutional credit mechanism has been brought out.
- Problems faced by dependents in getting assistance from the schemes of government relief and rehabilitative measures.

Similar studies have been carried out by several national and state level institutions. The study has not brought out any new knowledge and tried to explore new areas. The author tried to emphasise the endogenous factors rather than exogenous factors which have played a crucial role in making cultivation more vulnerable and unremunerative.

Dr. K. Suman Chandra

Credit Risk Management for Indian Banks by K. Vaidyanathan, SAGE Publications, New Delhi, Pages 359, Price : ₹ 595.

'Credit Risk Management for Indian Banks' is a comprehensive book on the subject of Credit Risk Management which enables managers of Indian banks to hone their skills to optimally balance the opposing forces of competition and credit risk exposures frequently faced by them. Similarly, the book discusses the causes and symptoms of credit risk in the context of financial sector liberalisation and the subsequent national policy re-engineered for both fund based and non-fund based credit products to meet the requirements of credit

managers, credit regulators, risk managers, treasury managers and investment bankers of the banking sector.

It appears that this book is one of the reference books on critical assessment of credit risk management of the banking sector in India and contains details of credit products and their risk management based on the guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India from time to time. Needless to add, this book is a must for those who want to delve into the risk management area in general and credit risk management in particular as it provides the analysis in a most comprehensive manner. The richness of the book lies in its diversity of perspectives, sectorial contents and breadth of issues covered with in-depth analyses. It is a rare blending of qualitative analysis with policy and action relevance inputs for the banking sector in its totality.

The book contains twelve chapters; each chapter redefines an important aspect of the credit risk management through detailed inputs. As it is not possible to present all the relevant points from all the chapters, some notable points from few chapters are illustrated below reflecting the richness of the contents and substances as illustrated in the book.

For example, in the first 'Introduction' chapter, the author clearly illustrated an example of a ship being built to sail on the high seas and earn from its voyages and not to be docked in the safety of a harbour. Likewise, a bank's dharma is to lend and earn, and in turn promote economic activities to create wealth and employment. It is, therefore, important that bankers are encouraged to assume prudent credit risk in the interest of banks themselves and overall economic development. Indeed in this introduction chapter itself, the author has paved the way on undertaking a systematic study of credit risk in the banking industry.

In Chapter II on 'Short-term Credit by Commercial Banks' the author suggested that in case of large corporate advances where working