

A Study on Role of Agriculture Sector in Maharashtra

T. D. Mahanwar

Associate Professor, Head, Department of Commerce, Savitribai Phule Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Satara, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

Maharashtra is an important state of India regarding its contribution to the agriculture development of the country. Agricultural sector of Maharashtra has going to lot of changes and improved performance during the last twenty years but its progress was not sustained and showed wide fluctuations. Maharashtra agriculture has instability in crop production and significant regional variations in the performance of agriculture in the state. Considering the farmer suicides in Maharashtra this acute problem has been highlighted. So there is need of time to move towards sustainable development of agriculture through providing basic infrastructure facility to agriculture sector in Maharashtra considering its vital role in economic development of the state as well as nation.

Through this paper, intends to throw light upon the role of agriculture sector in state economy through its contribution to national income, employment opportunity, agro processing, floriculture, and animal husbandry and export trade etc. I hope this paper will be able to understand the role and importance of agriculture in Maharashtra.

KEYWORDS: Agriculture, food grain, agro- processing, animal husbandry, agro tourism.

Introduction: Maharashtra is a leading State in agriculture. Principal crops grown in the State are rice, jowar, bajra, wheat, turmeric, onion, mung, urad, gram and other pulses. The State is a major producer of oilseeds. Groundnut, sunflower, soya bean are the major oil seed crops. The important cash crops are cotton, sugarcane, turmeric and vegetables. State is pioneer in onion production in the country. Near about 53 per cent of population is dependent on this sector for livelihood. In the last 25 years the agriculture sector has witnessed remarkable transformations. The sector continues to be vulnerable to the challenges posed by climate change and degradation of productive land. Erratic rains, changing weather conditions, reduction in the size of operational holdings, high input costs and market uncertainties leading to non-profitability continue to be the prime concerns of the agriculture sector in the State.

2. Objectives of the study:

The present paper is carried out with the following objectives.

1. To understand the share and status of agro Maharashtra at national level.
2. To know the role of agriculture in food grain and agro processing in Maharashtra.
3. To suggest suitable measures for overcoming the problems in agriculture.

3. Methodology of the study:

This paper is prepared on the basis of secondary sources of data, such as books, study material of professional courses, government survey reports as well as websites and some extent primary observations of the researcher.

Review of Literature:

1. Dr. Digambar.M. Tangalwad studied on A Review of Agrarian Studies in Maharashtra: Issues and Challenges, he had focused on the certain important aspects of Agrarian society. Agrarian societies are in the transition phase, and in crisis. Young generation is not interested for the cultivation, cultivable land is transforming for the non-cultivable activities. Small and marginal farmers are selling their lands and migrating to the urban places in search of alternatives for their survival. Due to the male migration female was undergone pressure of the agriculture. Due to suicide of male farmer the family migrated to the other places and small children and widows are in the crisis. Cost of input expenditure is increasing. Market depends upon the mediators. Farmers have no provision of ware houses for storage the products. So they don't have fix prices to their agricultural products. Governmental organizations have not any mechanism to purchase their products on the fixed rate and provide security to their food and production.

An overview of Agriculture Sector of Maharashtra State:

Indian economy is classified in to three sectors: agriculture, industry, and services. Agriculture includes crops, horticulture, milk and animal husbandry, aquaculture, fishing, sericulture, forestry, and related activities.

Maharashtra is a highly industrialized state but agriculture is the main occupation. Most of the area of the state is depend on monsoon season which in June and September which affects on productivity and agro production of the state. Basically agricultural season is governed by Monsoon. Quantity of the monsoon and heavy rainfall may lead to conditions of floods or droughts. Basically Western Maharashtra on the Deccan plateau involves east area of Pune , Solapur, Sangli, Satara and A.nagar facing problem of drought. Marathwada and Vidharb region are particularly known as drought prone area. Within last two decades farmers committing suicide in Maharashtra because of indebtedness due to irregular rainfall and cost of crop is higher than that of market price. Maharashtra has by far the largest number of Dams in India. Despite that, the net irrigated area totals only 33,500 square kilometers or about 17% of cultivable land. Principal Monsoon crops include millets such as Jwari, Bajri, and Finger millet. These have been grown in the region for thousands of years.

The main Cash crops include cotton, sugarcane, turmeric, onion and several oil seeds including groundnut, sunflower and soybean. The state has huge areas under fruit cultivation of which mangoes, bananas, grapes, pomegranate and oranges are the main ones.

The high rain fall areas of Konkan and eastern area of the Sahyadri Mountains, varieties of rice are cultivated rather than that wheat, pulses and onion production is undertaking in this area. Maharashtra is leading in co-operative entrepreneurship and these entrepreneurs are leading various co-operative sectors. This sector has been played crucial role for the development of agriculture in Maharashtra, especially in sugar, dairy, cotton, milk processing and Marketing. Marketing cooperatives play a significant part in marketing of fruit and vegetables. There are special Agricultural products like Chiku and oranges of Nagpur, Nasik grapes, Strawberry and turmeric of Satara, Jalgaon for eggplants. Maharashtra has a largest coastline of 720 km and state is leading in marine fish production.

Operational holdings

The concept of operational land holding is important because agricultural optimum use and minimum expenditure is depending on the size of land holding. As per the first Agriculture Census (1970-71) number of operational holdings and area of operational holdings in the State was 0.50 corers and 2.12 corers ha respectively. As per the tenth Agriculture Census (2015-16) number of operational holdings increased to 1.53 corer and vice versa area of operational holdings decreased to 2.05 corer ha. The average size of holding decreased from 4.28 ha in the first census to 1.34 ha as per tenth census.

Land utilization:

In case of land utilization, it is realized that the total 307.58 lakh ha geographical area of the State, the gross cropped area is 232.68 lakh ha while the net area sown was 169.42 lakh ha (about 55 per cent). 17% area is covered under forest, 11% land is not available for agriculture, 9% land is treated as follow land and we have 8% land which is treated as uncultivated land.

Major crop production and its share in national production:

Table N0-1.1
Rank of Crop-Group at National level of Maharashtra

Sr. no	Crop group	Share of Maharashtra	Rank in india
01.	Pulses	20.46	1 st
02.	Cereals	17.40	2 nd
03.	Sunflower	13.70	3 rd
04.	Sugarcane	25.40	2 nd
05.	Soya bean	36.28	2 nd
06.	Cotton	27.13	2 nd

Source: union budget and economic survey ministry of finance-2018-19

1. Maharashtra State is the second largest producer of pulses with 3.5 million ha. area under its cultivation. There is a huge yield gap across pulse growing districts in Maharashtra – Akola, Parbhani, Latur, Nanded and Amravati. Certain districts including Akola and Jalgaon are the major processing and trading hubs.
2. Maharashtra is major producer of Jowar and Arhar contributing 46.09 and 29.11 %, respectively to the total production of India. It is second largest producer of Cotton (22.21%), Soybean (28.14%), and total cereals (13.56%) in the country.
3. Karnataka with a production of 3.04 lakh tonnes from an area of 7.94 lakh hectares followed by Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Orissa and Tamil Nadu are major sunflower producing states of India. In India, Sunflower cultivation occupies about 1.48 M Ha area with average yield 0.6 MT/acre.
4. In Maharashtra, soybean is cultivated on an area of 3.8 M ha with production of 3.07 m ton with second rank in India.. In irrigation, farmers reported lack of irrigation facilities (81%) as major constraints in soybean cultivation
5. Cotton production during 2018-19 was estimated at 358.70 lakh bales. Among the states Gujarat stood first with 107.37 lakh bales followed by Maharashtra with 83.30

- lakh bales and Telangana with 52.07 lakh bales, above three states combined contributing nearly 67% to total cotton production during 2018-19
6. Initial estimates by the sugar commissioner's office had estimated crushing of 874 lakh tonnes of cane and production of 95 lakh tonnes of sugar. However as of April 2021, Maharashtra has ended up crushing 972.3 lakh tonnes of cane and producing 1101.73 lakh tonnes of sugar.

Role of agricultural sector in Maharashtra:

1. Agriculture influence on national income:

The average share of State's contribution highest (14.3 per cent) among all states in all India nominal GDP. Contribution of agriculture sector during 2018-19 was 23,32,992 corers and agriculture and allied activities sector contributed 215264 cores and share of agriculture sector in state economy is 9.22% only.

2. Agriculture role in generating employment:

In case of state economy near about two-third of working population earn their livelihood income through agriculture works. Maharashtra state provides more than 50% employment opportunity through agriculture. It involves unskilled, semiskilled labors are involve in agriculture sector. Rather than that agriculture sector also provides such labors to construction works and in other fields. On the other hand other sectors are failed to generate much of employment opportunity the growing working populations.

3. Agriculture providing food to the increasing population:

Due to increasing presser of population and labour surplus is the problem but there is a rapid increase in the demand for food. Within last two decade food production increasing at a fast rate. The existing levels of food consumption in these countries are very low and with a little increase in the per capita income, the demand for food rise steeply. Therefore, agriculture is able to continuously increase it marketed surplus of food grains.

4. Role of Horticulture in state:

It is today emerging as an important horticultural State in the country. Different types of soil, diverse agro climatic conditions, adequate technical man power, well developed communication facilities, increasing trend in drip irrigation, green house, use of cool chain facilities and vibrant farmer organization offer wide opportunities to grow different horticultural crops in the State. Best quality grapes produced in the State are now exported to other countries. Mango, particularly 'Alphanso', grown in Konkan, has already created name and fame in the international market. The State has an area of 13.66 lakh hectares under various fruit crops like mango, banana, orange, grape, cashew nut, etc.

5. Agro Food Processing:

This industry in our state consists of very basic processing. The main processing industries in the State are sugar, poultry, rice mill, flour mill, meat, edible oil, vanaspati, fruit and vegetable, milk processing units etc. There exist immense opportunities for modernizing food processing units in the State. Rice, wheat, soya bean, jawar, grapes, pomegranates and mangoes are the main crops that are available in the State for primary and secondary process.

6. **Floriculture in Maharashtra:** Maharashtra is major producer of floriculture with more than 4000 hectares of area under various flowers. These are rose, chrysanthemum, marigold, jasmine and tuberose. Whereas, gladioluses, aster, zinnia, Stacie, lilies, gerberas and carnations are grown among the non-traditional flowers. Maharashtra has emerged as a leading State for production, export and consumption of flowers in the country. The State is setting up of large number of Export Oriented Units with foreign collaboration and investment. Maharashtra is offering state of the art infrastructure for floriculture industry to grow. Maharashtra Government is promoting a Floriculture Park at Nasik and Pune region.
7. **Market for industrial products:** Agriculture sector is playing vital role in providing raw material to various agro- based industries like fertilizer, pesticides, pumps, pipes, seed and agriculture engineering products like tractors and tools. These industries are purely dependent on agriculture products. Purchasing power of farmers in rural area is very necessary for industrial development. Near about 52% population in Maharashtra is living in rural area. After green revolution the purchasing power of the large farmers increased due to their enhanced income and limited tax burden.
8. **Influence on internal and external trade and commerce:**
Internal trade plays important role in Indian economy. Wholesale and retail trade, hawkers, agents are players of internal trade. They are providing indirect and direct sales service to common people. It provides self employment to concern mediators. Import and export trade is also involved in trade and commerce. Due to agriculture export it is possible to straighten the foreign currency level of country. Internal and external trade helps in the expansion of service sector.
9. **Agriculture allied activities:**
It involves animal husbandry. It provides regular income to farmers and support for their increasing income. This sectors provides power, milk, meat, egg, wool and leather etc. the overall GDP of animal husbandry sector is near about 25 percent to agriculture sector.
In other words animal husbandry sector is backbone of agriculture sector. Most of milk processing units, leather processing units are depend on animal husbandry. Animal husbandry is purely depending on agriculture sector. So this sector is playing vital role in Indian economy.
10. **Contribution to government budget:**
From the first five year plan agriculture is considered as prime revenue collecting sector for the central and state budgets. State government collecting high revenue from agriculture and allied activities. Road and railway transport system also collect handsome revenue as freight charges from agriculture products like semi finished and finished products.
11. **Greater competitive advantage:**
Indian agriculture has a cost advantage in several agriculture commodities in the export sector because of low labour cost and self-sufficiency in input supply.
12. **Agro tourism in Maharashtra:** Agro tourism is now sunrise industry. Now a day's most of urban people are attract towards Agro tourism. Urban people have lot of tensions and not eco- friendly environment due to high urbanization.

Agro tourism provision for visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agro tourism operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education and getting peace of mind in eco-friendly environment. It is an active involvement in the activities of traditional rural farming operations. Agro tourism creates awareness about rural life and knowledge about agricultural science among urban school children and people. It provides best alternative for school picnic which are located in urban area.

13. **Agriculture Export:** Maharashtra is leading state in exporting various fresh fruits, vegetables and processed food products in Europe, USA, Japan, Bangladesh and Pakistan etc. Agriculture export is providing better option for the marketing of the agro commodities & provides the alternative way of utilization of surplus production

Conclusion:

1. Recent years have seen a huge increase in farmers committing suicide in Maharashtra because of indebtedness resulting from monsoon failure, climate change, and at times cost of growing crops being higher than the market price. The cause for suicide has been linked in some studies to inability to loans mostly taken from banks to purchase expensive seeds and fertilizers.
2. We have only 17% irrigated land so Irrigation facilities should be extended so that agriculture could be made less dependent upon rain water. Maharashtra has by far the largest number of Dams in India.
3. Over the last fifty years, the private sugar factories and other cooperative bodies have played a crucial part in encouraging political participation and as a stepping stone for aspiring politicians.
4. There is a wide scope for setting up processing units for tomatoes, onion, cabbage, okra and cauliflower. In particular, fruit juice pulp and concentrated units, winery, distillery, pickles, rice mill, flour mill, dal mill, soya bean extraction and refining units etc. can be set up in the industrial areas of the State for value addition of agriculture production.
5. Farmers should aware about efficient and effective use of water resources, establish agro-processing units and avoid wastage of agricultural produce, develop better-value chain market mechanism as well as direct marketing system.
6. Considering degradation of land, steps should be towards reduction in desertification & degradation of land and protection & improvement of bio-diversity is the necessity for ensuring sustainable agriculture in Maharashtra.
7. Government should take initiative for the enhance farmers' income. Various schemes and program must implement for the enhancing agricultural produce, to promote export through agro-processing. There is need of time to provide timely data regarding present crop production and various situations of weather forecasting by applying weather parameters..

References

1. Bhakti Kelkar, <https://cse.azimpremjiuniversity.edu.in/impact-of-covid-19-on-agriculture-sector-study-of-5-villages-in-marathwada-region-maharashtra>

2. Kalamkar (14 September 2011). Agricultural Growth and Productivity in Maharashtra: Trends and Determinants. Allied Publishers. pp. 18, 39, 64, 73. ISBN 978-81-8424-692-6
 3. Digambar.M. Tangalwad -A Review of Agrarian Studies in Maharashtra: Issues and Challenges IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 22, Issue 10, Ver. 10 (October. 2017) PP 49-53 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845.
 4. B.B.Mohanty, "Regional Disparity in Agricultural Development of Maharashtra" Economic and Political Weekly Feb 7, 2009.
 5. Dhanagare, D.N., "Maharashtraatil Samajsastriya Sansodhan Kahi Durlaxit Parasncha Magova, Published in Samajsastra Sansodhan Patrika, Volume 14/15, 2013.
 6. Dr. T. D. Mahanwar 'A Study of Agro -Tourism in Maharashtra, presented and published research paper at state level seminar organized by Dhaiwadi college, Dahaiwadi, March-2015
 1. Economic Survey of Maharashtra- 2019-20s0baxcx
- Website:
1. https://agricoop.nic.in/sites/default/files/Maharashtra-SAP_V1.3-2.pdf
 2. <https://www.nabard.org/demo/auth/writereaddata/File/OC%207.pdf>