CHAPTER VII

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[This chapter lists the findings of the study. They are categorised as major and minor. In the light of the findings, a few hypothesis are listed as per the objectives of the study.]

The foregoing analysis clearly points to certain significant findings regarding the impact of tenurial reform on a changing agrarian society. The main inferences are confined to the economic front. For convenience one may categorise these as (i) major findings: the changes in economic sphere and (ii) minor or secondary findings with social and ecological implications.

(i) **Major findings** :

1. The tenancy reform has substantially increased the number of small and marginal holdings at the expense of large and medium holdings. Further the average size of holding in the landlord class has decreased considerably as against a slight decrease in this average for the tenant class.
2. The reform has provided an impetus to grow commercial crops. The alternative opted in place of paddy is areca in most of the cases.

3. The landlords have shown greater tendency of shift to commercial crop as compared to the tenants. The former record a higher percentage among those who shifted to areca from paddy. The higher initial investment for areca cultivation and the longer gestation period seem to be the main reasons for fewer tenants opting for areca. The landlords had the advantage of traditional credit reserve to sustain these requirements.

4. More than 80% of tenants and landlords converted upto 1 acre into areca garden after the reform.

5. Generally three crops of paddy per year are feasible, subject to availability of irrigation. It is noted that after reform the proportion of farmers growing two or three crops has substantially increased.

6. The percentage of persons who have increased the number of paddy crops is higher among tenants than among landlords. About 67% of tenants grow 2 or 3 crops today as against the 40% before the reform.

7. About 5.6% of the landlords have discontinued paddy cultivation and they now grow only areca and coconut.

8. The indivisible inputs owned except livestock have increased both among landlords and tenants, irrespective of size of holding.
9. Owning of livestock has decreased both among landlords and tenants, the degree of decrease being high in the former class.

10. The magnitude of investment for paddy cultivation has shown an increase in both classes after the reform. This implies a greater participation by farmers in agricultural activity irrespective of their class.

11. An increased investment in agriculture with higher intensity of cultivation has taken place in holdings of all sizes, irrespective of tenurial status, of course with a varying degree.

12. The productivity and total production have increased significantly after reform. The productivity of the landlord class has increased more than that of the tenant class, as revealed by the chisquare measure of association.

13. As regards employment, there is an increased absorption of labour by all farmers. But the degree of absorption varies.

14. It is generally accepted that small farms absorb more labour. However, the present study notes that in the tenant class large farmers exhibit greater labour absorption as compared to the small and marginal farmers.

15. In the landlord category the nature of labour absorption is in agreement with the theory: smaller size class provides greater employment opportunities.
16. A substantial number of agricultural labourers have been benefited by land reform, land being distributed to them. This has increased their opportunity to work in their own land.

17. The income level has increased for all farmers among tenants and landlords. Even the agricultural labourers have shown a marked improvement in their level of income after the reform.

18. The mean income from paddy has shown a decrease for the landlord class as a whole while it has increased for the tenant class. The income from areca has shown a greater rise in landlord class than in the tenant class.

19. The sectoral composition of the total income of a farmer is changing more rapidly for landlord class than the for tenants. After reform, the share of secondary and tertiary sectors is increasing faster in relation to income from agriculture in the landlord class than in the tenant class. The labour class has also shown a sizable increase due to income from other sectors (especially from beedi rolling).

20. Though the total income has increased among farmers of both classes, the reduced coefficient of variation shows greater equitable distribution of income in general.
21. The credit market in the region has undergone a drastic change helping all farmers irrespective of the tenurial condition that existed before reform. The commercial banks and cooperatives have been assisting all farmers to a great extent. In fact this seems to be a major reason for the success of land reform in the region.

22. The positive role of the voluntary organisation 'Srikshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Centre' is evident from the fact that the marginal and small farmers and agricultural labourers of the Belthangadi taluk have achieved a greater income earning capacity as compared to their counterparts in other taluks of the district.

Minor findings:

23. Farmers have accepted land reform as a welcome change in their social life irrespective of their class.

24. The initial rift that existed between landlords and tenants has almost subsided and the two classes have started cooperating for a harmonious social life.

25. If forethought were to be given to certain ecological implications, several social tensions due to reform could have been avoided.

26. The land reform policy has neglected some basic ecological issues. This will have a negative impact in the long run and detrimental economic consequences.
27. Land reform has an adverse effect on the folk culture of the region. For instance, the specialities like 'Bhoota-kola', 'Ati-kelenja', and 'Madira', are on the verge of extinction without alternative patronage.

The above findings fulfill the objectives of the study. The variations in size and number of holdings, production, employment and income have been analysed. General social and ecological issues are also examined leading to certain specific conclusions.

Test of hypotheses

We now consider three specific hypotheses in the context of land reform and examine their acceptability in the light of the present sample data.

(i) The reform has lead to subdivision and fragmentation of holdings thus making them operationally nonviable and reducing the production capacity of the farmers.

It is noted that the number of small and marginal farmers has increased after the reform. This implies, that subdivision of agricultural holding has taken place assuming that the total agricultural area available is almost the same. However, more important is the question of productivity, which is shown has definite increase in all
classes of farmers irrespective of their tenurial status. Thus the latter part of hypothesis pertaining to productivity is not tenable. This is of practical significance.

(ii) The second hypothesis is that reform has thrown a sizable number of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers out of agrarian sector. Even this is not substantiated by the study. In fact none of the marginal and small farmers have shifted to other occupations. The shift by agricultural labourers is by choice motivated by better financial returns in occupations like beedi rolling. The attractive returns in other sectors and the strenuous work involved in agricultural operations are often responsible for a shift from agriculture to other sectors. The land reform is hardly a cause for the moving out. Thus the second hypothesis is also not accepted.

(iii) The third hypothesis is that "the reform has led to reduced agricultural income for small and marginal farmers, pushing them further down economically". The study shows that the agricultural income of all farmers including the small and marginal farmers has increased after the reform, even after allowing for inflation. Thus the study does not support the hypothesis.
In brief, the three hypotheses concerning (i) productivity, (ii) employment and (iii) income, cannot be accepted in the light of the sample information. This points to the positive impact of landreform on each of three factors and hence an overall desirable effect.