CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS

The farm sector in India is in crises and it is reflected through the growing number of suicides by farmers in some states. Karnataka State is one of the states hit by the epidemic of suicide among farming community. India experienced first incident of farmers’ suicide in 1997 and according to the National Crimes Records Bureau Report since then nearly 2 lakh farmers have committed suicides. In Karnataka alone more than 30,000 farmers have committed suicides. As a result, agriculture sector is facing new challenges. These challenges are the outcome of globalization and privatization. Indian agriculture to a major extent depends on natural rainfall, which is often a failure. Drought is a common phenomenon. Karnataka State is often hit by drought conditions. There is depletion of ground water, indebtedness by farmers is growing, and youngsters do not take up to agriculture looking to the present fate of farmers. As a result there is distress in agriculture sector.

The small and marginal farmers are often the victims of debt they have taken from money lenders and dalals or the commission agents. The money lenders charge the heavy rate of interest; which they are unable to pay. The financial crises the farmers facing force them to fall in the vicious debt trap of money lenders. They are unable to get the loan from recognized financial institutions due to complicated procedural formalities. With the invention new technologies, HYV seeds, effective pesticides and chemical fertilizers and with the ever increasing demand for agricultural products farmers showed lot of interest in incorporating new methods of cultivation. They started cultivation of cash crops, like sugarcane, ground nut, cotton which can fetch them more income. This resulted in the conversion from labour intensive farming to intensive capital farming. In the capital
intensive farming irrespective of the category of farmer investment on the farm work increases which the marginal, small-scale and semi-medium scale farmers unable spend. Consequently, the present farming community is at the risk of falling in debt trap than ever before. The farmers who are unable to face these problems take a deterministic stand to end their life by committing suicide.

Most of the suicidal victims in Dharwad district were men, and belong to the age group of 48-57. They are married and majority of them are illiterates, with more of the social responsibilities to perform, especially the marriage of the grown up daughters and education of young children. Majority of the farmers committed suicide belong to the small-scale and semi-medium categories. Analysis of the data pointed out that the adverse economic conditions due to failure of crops are the main cause for their distress. The farmers due to the feeling of hopelessness; failed to resolve the problems and unable to find funds to repay the loan. Majority of farm victims (69.34 per cent) live in the nuclear family, hence, there was no individual or the group to seek reliable advice for agricultural works, or to seek funds or for handling the private and personal issues. The farmers use the insecticide spray to kill the insects and protect the crops. They know the fetal effect of insecticides. The debt ridden farmer consumes this poison instead of spraying it crops. Nearly 50 per cent of farm victims have misused insecticide for suicidal purpose.

Of the 75 farm suicides the review committee under the chairmanship of the Assistant Commissioner of Dharwad district has recommended compensation only in 21 cases. The packages announced by the Union and the State governments and the measures taken by the NGO’s have brought down the rate of suicide, but have failed to completely mitigate the suffering of the farmers and commission of suicide by farmers still is continued.
There is community intervention in solving certain agriculture related problems especially in the purchase of agriculture implements and also in sharing the water for agriculture purpose.

The two hypothesis with which the researcher has worked were tested with statistical tools for their significance and they are proved to be significant.

The discussions the researcher held during the course of field work with different people like the senior farmers, elderly persons in the villages, Chairman and members of Grama Panchayats, the ‘Raita Sangha’ leaders, Social Activists, ‘Youth Club’ members, Agricultural Experts and the outcome the analyses of data collected by the researcher have been given in the form of following suggestions. They are:

- Water and electricity are the basic necessities of agriculture work; measures should be taken for the proper supply of water and electricity without interruption.

- The Union and State Government should devise a proper methodology for working out the Minimum Support Price for all the farm products, so that no farm product does not go a waste. In the absence proper MSP the farmers the disgusted farmers throw their farm products especially vegetables on the roads instead of direct selling to the commission agents.

- Price Stabilization – An appropriate mechanism should be devised to control the price fluctuation that will help in risk mitigation.

- Reduce Social Expenditure – Expenses on marriages and other social functions should be minimized. The civil society should actively involve itself to bring about the changes to this effect.
• Criteria for Compensation - The criteria for compensation should be clear, unambiguous and minimize scope for subjective interpretation.

• Loan from moneylenders and other informal sources should be included while evaluating indebtedness status.

• Crop loss by an individual farmer due to theft, fire or other reasons should also be considered for crop compensation.

• The lessons pertaining to agriculture, importance of village life should be introduced at the primary and High School.

• Agriculture related lessons in the form of extension lecture should be organized in each of the villages at least twice a month to educate the farmers.

• Efforts should be made to create awareness of the laws relating to the welfare of the farmers. Awareness also may be created among farmers about their land records and other revenue documents.

• For the effective management of water lands should be scientifically classified for its content.

• The support price on all agricultural products should be announced and they should be revised regularly.

• Measures should be initiated to attract educated young persons for farming work.

• Stringent measures should be initiated against the traders who sell spurious seeds and fertilizers.

• More number of cold storages should be built at every panchayat level for proper protection of vegetables, fruits and other commodities.
• Measures should be initiated for proper distribution of subsidized seeds especially to Marginal, Small and Medium-Scale farmers at each Gram Panchayat.

• Women in the villages are to be properly trained in tailoring, preparation of home products and marketing the home products.

• Calamity relief mechanism should be properly organized. The relief measures announced to farmers should reach them at the earliest possible time so that can plan for rest of the months in the year.

• Crop insurance procedure should be made and simplified.

• Organic farming should be encouraged and the farmers of organic farming should be rewarded.

• Wide publicity about farmers’ helpline both at the Union and State level should be given.

• The criteria for compensation should be clear, unambiguous and minimize scope for subjective interpretation.

• Farmers should be educated not to fall to the debt trap of private money lenders. The stringent action should be taken against unlicensed private money lender.

• Compulsory adult education should be given and awareness should be created about the land and other related documents on agriculture and property.

• Measures should be taken to create awareness to the farmers about laws relating to cooperative societies and other financial institutions.

• In view of increased cost of cultivation an alternate cultivation method has to be adopted. It is suggested that the group farming instead of individual farming or group facilitating mechanism has to be devised.
• The farmers should be motivated to grow the crops which suit with agro-climatic conditions and they should be properly educated and encouraged in organic farming. Farmers should be properly educated about the methods of using manure, fertilizers, pesticides and suitable crop pattern through the proper media.

• The Farmers Counseling Centers (FCC) should be established at the village Panchayat level.

• The Agricultural Assistants working in the villages should be properly trained about the advanced agricultural techniques.

• Mobile soil and water testing laboratories should be set up by the government to make them available to the farmers to test the soil and water.

If the above suggestions are incorporated by the authorities concerned while redesigning the agriculture policies that will help in mitigating the suffering of farming community and the suicidal tendency which is a curse on our farming community that will come down to a greater extent and instill confidence among farmers and help to bring smile on the face of our farmers.