

CHAPTER - VIII  
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C O N C L U S I O N

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In the present study various aspects of agriculture are examined. The study reveals that the agriculture is the main occupation of this region and majority of people are engaged in agriculture. It is the mainstay of the region's population. In each taluka over 85 percent of population is rural and depends on cultivation of land. The per capita available agricultural land varies from 0.25 hectare to 0.65 hectare and this is smaller compared to state average. Therefore, the relative co-efficient of overpopulation is higher than the state average. This excessive pressure of rural population on agricultural land has resulted into the sub-division and fragmentation of holdings. In general, the region is mainly an area of small and medium size holdings. So far as the spatial variation is concerned in the east and the north eastern part of the district, the landholding size is small and in the undulating area of the district it is large. Due to small division of holdings the small plots are scattered and results into the wastage of land, time and energy. This problem can be solved through the consolidation of holdings. The consolidation of holdings in the district was first applied in Karmaia taluka in 1948. Cultivators are dominant in the region and the system of land tenure is individual farming.

From the foregoing study, it may be also concluded that the increased farm credit facilities provided the opportunity to

the farmers to dig the wells, to install pipe lines and pumping sets. As a result irrigated farming was started in many parts of the district. The percentage of irrigated area in Malshiras and Pandharpur taluka is greater whereas in other parts of the district the proportion of irrigated area is very low. With the development of Ujani Project, the area under irrigation may increase in the district. Wells and tanks are the major sources of irrigation in the region. This irrigation has enabled the farmers to accept the new innovations. These include the use of fertilizers, improved seeds, pesticides and agricultural machinery. These new innovations are responsible in breaking the old structure of farming in the region. Due to these technological determinants farmers are making the changes in allocation of land to different crops.

Landuse and cropping pattern of the region are strongly influenced by the physical and socio-economic factors. The physical factors have put the limitations on the use of land, and the socio-economic and technological factors have changed these aspects to certain extent. In the general landuse pattern of the region, the proportion of cultivated area ranks first whereas the area under forest is relatively low. The cultivated area is normally sown every year and the foodgrains dominate the cropping pattern. The area under kharif cropping is less in comparison to rabi cropping. Jowar is a main rabi crop grown

in all the talukas of the region. The other cereal crops of the region are bajara and wheat but they are insignificant in the overall cropping pattern of the region. Pulses are also significant in region's cropping pattern. Tur is the leading pulse crop covering substantial area in the east. Gram is another important pulse crop in the south east and northern part of the region. On the banks of the rivers of Bhima, Sina and Man sugarcane is the major cash crop whereas in Malshiras taluka it is cultivated with the irrigation facilities provided by Nira right bank canal. Thus, with the development of Co-operative sugar factories and irrigation facilities, the area under sugarcane is increasing recently. Oilseeds particularly groundnut is the most important cash crop of the region and is concentrated in the eastern part of the district. Spices, vegetables, fruits are also raised every where but they are very insignificant in the overall cropping pattern of the region.

The changes in cropping pattern have occurred due to many factors. The major changes have occurred in cereal crops particularly jowar. The declining crops are mainly condiments, spices, and minor oilseeds. The changes in landuse pattern have occurred in areas where irrigation water is available. On the basis of these changes the region may be grouped into three categories of crop pattern change viz. high, moderate and low.

Based on the major crops of the region, the district is grouped into six crop combination regions. So far as the crop

concentration and diversification is concerned the crop concentration is high in North Solapur and Mangalvedha talukas, and the western part of Solapur district is comparatively less diversified than the eastern part. There is a close relationship between crop combination and crop diversification of the talukas.

There are regional disparities in the levels of agriculture/productivity. The physical conditions of the region particularly rainfall play an important role in determining the agricultural productivity. So the agricultural productivity of the region is the outcome of agricultural inputs and local physical conditions. The high productivity is seen in middle part of the region whereas, the south western part may be regarded as a weaker zone in respect of agricultural productivity. There is a considerable scope to increase the agricultural productivity, if the farmers are provided the necessary irrigation facilities. The surplus agricultural production is sent to the local market centres. The marketing system in the region is of three types namely, regulated, retail and wholesale and periodical. Regulated and wholesale market centres are located at the taluka headquarters and other urban centres of the district. Barshi and Solapur are the important market centres of the region and they are famous for turdal and jowar marketing. Every market centre besides agricultural commodities also regulate the livestock trade.

Livestocks are the important part of our farming society. They are the keystone in our farming. Cattle, buffaloes, sheep and goats are the major categories of the livestock of the region. In the total livestock population of the region, cattles rank second whereas goats rank first. Buffaloes are the chief source of milk in the region but ranks third. Cattle and goats combination is confined to Karmala, Madha, and Mohol talukas while cattle goat and buffalo combination is observed in eastern part of the district. Many changes have occurred in the proportions of livestock during the period under investigation. Cattles have decreased while buffaloes have increased in number. Livestocks live on fodder as a source of food. There are three types of fodder in the district. They are green fodder, dry fodder and concentrates. Livestocks in this region do not get adequate amount of green fodder and concentrates. There is a greater deficiency of fodder and results into improper feeding of livestock.

Agriculture is dependent on rainfall but in Solapur district the rainfall is scanty, uncertain, irregular and unevenly distributed. The breaks in monsoon are normally experienced during July and August, it may extend by 2 weeks to 13 weeks. A break is defined as a less than 15 mm. rainfall, so the water availability period is very short. This nature of rainfall creates drought conditions in the district. The drought

intensity was more severe in this region in 1972-73 drought year. Generally, less than 750 mm. rainfall is regarded as a scarcity condition and in Solapur district the normal rainfall is 724 mm. and this is very low as compared to 750 mm. rainfall criteria. Therefore, the whole Solapur district except Malshiras taluka where irrigation facilities are available, is regarded as a drought prone area. Thus, the delimitation of drought prone areas <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ based mainly on the inadequacy of rainfall. Due to this nature of rainfall the cropping pattern and production is dwindling. The cropping pattern in kharif season is less assured and therefore, mixed cropping is extensively practised. To overcome the drought conditions many measures and programmes are introduced by the government.